A TREASURY OF
MYSTIC TERMS

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MYSTIC TERMS

PART II
SPIRITUAL GUIDES & PRACTITIONERS

VOLUME 9

JOHN DAVIDSON

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EDITED AND LARGELY WRITTEN BY

JOHN DAVIDSON

WITH THE HELP OF AN INTERNATIONAL TEAM

A Treasury of Mystic Terms has been compiled using the collective skills of an international team of researchers, contributors, assistant editors and readers with a wide variety of religious and cultural backgrounds. All members of the team are spiritual seekers, most of whom have found inspiration and encouragement in the teachings of the mystics of Beas in India. All those involved have given freely to this project, both as a source of inspiration for themselves, and as a way of showing to others the essential unity behind all the apparent variety in religion, philosophy, and mysticism.

Everybody has a perspective or a bias – coloured glasses through which they view the world. So although every attempt has been made to handle each entry within its own religious or mystical context, if any particular perspective is detected, it will inevitably be that of the contributors and their perception of mysticism. This does not mean, of course, that the contributors have always been in agreement. The preparation of the *Treasury* has often resulted in healthy debate!

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Acknowledgements

In the course of compiling the *Treasury,* the editorial team have consulted two major sources. Firstly, the scriptures and writings of mystics and others who have written on spiritual and mystical matters. Secondly, the works of scholars concerning these texts and their associated traditions. To all of these, we will be forever grateful. Among the mystics, we owe especial gratitude to the masters of Beas who have been, and who remain, the primary source of spiritual inspiration for most of the editorial team.

Among the many scholars and other writers, all sources and references have been cited in the appropriate places. In particular:

The translations of the Buddhist *Dhammapada* are founded mostly upon the work of S. Radhakrishnan and Narada Thera.

Most of the translations of the *Bhagavad Gītā* have drawn upon the earlier translations of S. Radhakrishnan and Swami Tapasyananda.

Quotations from the *Ādi Granth* are from the English translations of Manmohan Singh, Dr Gopal Singh, Dr Gurbachan Singh Talib, and Dr Sant Singh Khalsa.

The sayings of Heraclitus are found only as fragments, quoted in the works of other writers of antiquity. Various scholarly numbering systems exist for these fragments, the system employed here being that used by Philip Wheelwright in *Heraclitus* (Princeton University Press, 1959).

Most of the translations of Rūmī's *Maśnavī* are based upon the work of R.A. Nicholson.

Many scholarly translations of Zarathushtra's *Gāthās* into European languages have been made from defective Pahlavi translations. The translations here are from the Avestan, and are based largely on the original work of Dr I.R.S. Taraporewala.

The indigenous Guaraní of eastern Paraguay, made up of three large subgroups – the Mbyá, the Paí Cayuá, and the Avá-Chiripá – are described in books and articles by the most notable experts in this field, Miguel Alberto Bartolomé, León Cádogan, Alfred Métraux, and Egon Schaden. Most of the information used for the Guaraní mystical terms derives from these scholars' studies of the Mybá and Avá-Chiripá. If a term is general to all indigenous Guaraní, it is labelled (G); if a term is known only to apply to the Avá-Chiripá subgroup, it is labelled (AC). The transliteration conventions used for all Avá-Chiripá terms are the same as those used

in Miguel Alberto Bartolomé's article, *Shamanism and Religion Among the Avá-Chiripá,* which resulted from his field studies in the northeastern region of Paraguay in 1968 and 1969. Bartolomé explains that since Paraguayan Guaraní has an officially recognized written form, he does not use phonetic symbols except the letter 'y' for the sixth guttural vowel.

Special mention must be made of the extensive compilation of material made by Dr Javad Nurbakhsh in his 15-volume *Farhang-i Nūrbakhsh: Iṣṭilāḥāt-i Taṣawwuf,* translated by Terry Graham *et al.* (1984–2001) as *Sufi Symbolism: The Nurbakhsh Encyclopedia of Sufi Terminology.* Dr Nurbakhsh's considerable contribution to Sufi literature has been of great help to us in the compilation of the *Treasury,* and we have made significant use of this material, both the Persian and its English translation.

Existing dictionaries and encyclopaedias are naturally of great assistance when preparing a work such as the *Treasury.* We gladly acknowledge the particular help we have received from *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga,* Georg Feuerstein (Paragon House, New York, 1990); *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* ed. H.A.R. Gibb *et al.* (Brill, Leiden, 1960–2005); *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Zen Buddhism,* Helen Baroni (Rosen, New York, 2002); *Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary,* Daito Shuppansha (Tokyo, 1965); *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism,* Damien Keown (Oxford University Press, 2003); *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines,* Ven. Nyanatiloka (Buddhist Publication Society, Sri Lanka, 1988); *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism,* Robert Buswell & Donald Lopez (Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 2014); *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English,* ed. Ernest Klein (Carta Jerusalem, University of Haifa, 1987); *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Judaica Multimedia, Jerusalem, 1997); *Jewish Encyclopedia* (Funk & Wagnalls, New York, 1901–6, www.jewishencyclopedia.com); *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (Robert Appleton Co., 1907–14); *Wikipedia* (wikipedia.org, 2001–); *Hawaiian Dictionary*, Mary Kawena Pukui & Samuel Elbert (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1986); *Te Aka: Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index,* John Moorfield (www.maoridictionary.co.nz); *A Dictionary of the Maori Language*, Herbert Williams (nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WillDict.html); and *The A to Z of Jainism,* Kristi Wiley (Vision, New Delhi, 2006).

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Hebrew Verse, ed. T. Carmi (Allen Lane, 1981), copyright © by T. Carmi 1981; *The Ladder of Perfection,* Walter Hilton, translated by Leo Sherley Price, introduction by Clifton Wolters (Penguin Classics, 1957, reissued 1988), translation copyright © Leo Sherley Price, introduction copyright © 1988 Clifton Wolters; reprinted by permission of Penguin Books Ltd.

The Philokalia: The Complete Text, Compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth, ed. & tr. G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, Kallistos Ware (Faber & Faber, London), copyright © by The Eling Trust (1979, 1981, 1984, 1995); reprinted by permission of Metropolitan Kallistos and The Eling Trust.

The Lotus Sutra and Its Opening and Closing Sutras, tr. Burton Watson (Soka Gakkai, 2009), copyright © by Soka Gakkai (Tokyo) 2009; reprinted by permission of Soka Gakkai International. In these excerpts, to allow for standard *Treasury* usage, some terms have been replaced by the Sanskrit, or the Chinese term has been added in brackets. For the original, see: www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/lsoc/toc/.

The Sufi Path of Love: The Spiritual Teachings of Rūmī, William C. Chittick, the State University of New York Press, copyright © 1984, State University of New York; reprinted by permission of the State University of New York Press, all rights reserved.

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Thanks are also due to Dr John Smith, now retired from the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Cambridge University, for his Unicode character fonts.

Abbreviations

General

Abbreviations that are a common part of written language are not included in this list.

C4th	fourth century (*e.g.)*
cf.	*confero,* compare (L. I compare)
col.	column
fol.	folio
ff.	and the following (pages, lines, *etc.*)
lit.	literally
n.	foot- or endnote(s)
passim	here and there throughout (L)
p.	page
pp.	pages
pron.	pronounced
ret.	retrieved web page, followed by the month and year of retrieval
▸1 ▸3 ▸4	Indicates a yet-to-be-published entry in Parts I, III, or IV

Dates

b.	born
c.	circa, about
d.	died
fl.	flourished
r.	reigned or ruled
AH	*Anno Hegirae,* Muslim lunar calendar, from 622 CE, the Hegira *(al-Hijrah),* the year of Muḥammad's flight to Madīnah
BCE	Before Common Era, equivalent to BC.
CE	Common Era, equivalent to AD.
SH	Solar Hijri, the official solar calendar of Iran and Afghanistan, starting on the vernal equinox.

Languages

A Arabic	C Chinese	Gk Greek
AC Avá-Chiripá	Es Spanish	H Hindi
Am Aramaic	Fr French	He Hebrew
Av Avestan	G Guaraní	Hw Hawaian

J	Japanese	P	Persian	S	Sanskrit
L	Latin	Pa	Pali	Su	Sumerian
M	Marathi	Pk	Prakrit	T	Tibetan
Md	Mandaean	Pu	Punjabi	U	Urdu
Mo	Māori	Pv	Pahlavi		

Sources Cited

See *Bibliography* for full details of published works. Published collections of the writings of Indian Saints have been referred to in source references as below. Other collections published as the *Bānī, Granthāvalī, Padāvalī* or *Shabdāvalī* of various Indian Saints have been similarly abbreviated.

Bullā Sāhib kā Shabd Sār	*Shabd Sār*
Charaṇdās Jī kī Bānī	*Bānī*
Dariyā Sāhib ke chune hue Shabd	*Chune hue Shabd*
Dhanī Dharamdās Jī kī Shabdāvalī	*Shabdāvalī*
Kabīr Granthāvalī	*Granthāvalī*
Kabīr Sāhib kā Bījak	*Bījak*
Kabīr Sākhī Sangrah	*Sākhī Sangrah*
Keshavdās Jī kī Amīghūnt	*Amīghūnt*
Kullīyāt-i Bulleh Shāh	*Kullīyāt*
Mīrā Bṛihat Padāvalī	*Bṛihat Padāvalī*
Mīrā Sudhā Sindhu	*Sindhu*
Nāmdev kī Hindi Padāvalī	*Padāvalī*
Ravidās Darshan	*Darshan*
Sant Guru Ravidās Vāṇī	*Vāṇī*
Shrī Nāmdev Gāthā	*Gāthā*
Tulsīdās kī Bārahmāsī	*Bārahmāsī*
Tulsī Sāhib Hāthrasvale kī Shabdāvalī	*Shabdāvalī*

Other books and texts cited are abbreviated as follows:

AAA	*The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles,* ed. & tr. W.R. Wright (English).
AAF1–2	*Owrād-al-Ahbāb va Fosūs-al-Ādāb,* 2 vols., Abu-al-Mufākhir Yahyā Bākharzi, ed. Iraj Afshar.
ABST	*The Alchemical Body,* David White.
ACJV	*The Arhats in China and Japan,* M.V. de Visser.
AGK	*Sri Guru Granth Sahib: Khalsa Consensus Translation,* tr. Dr Sant Singh Khalsa.
AH1–2	*Against Heresies,* in *The Writings of Irenaeus,* 2 vols., tr. A. Roberts & W.H. Rambaud.
ALMG	*Shah Abdul Latif,* M.M. Gidvani.

ALSE	*As Long As Space Endures,* ed. Edward Arnold.
AMBF	*Aḥādīś-i Maśnavī,* B. Furūzānfar.
AMM	*Dīvān-i Ḥakīm Abū al-Majd Majdūd ibn-i Ādam Sanā'ī Ghaznavī,* ed. Mudarris Riżavī.
AMT	*Āthār-i Darvīsh Muḥammad Ṭabasī,* ed. Īraj Afshār & Muḥammad Taqī Dāneshpazhuh.
ANT	*The Apocryphal New Testament,* tr. M.R. James.
ANTB	*Anguttara Nikaya,* tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu. See *Acknowledgements.*
ANTW	*Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Revelations,* tr. A. Walker.
APAK	*Ashta Pahuda,* Acharya Kundkund, tr. Paras Das Jain Niyaytirthi.
ARRV	*Awakening to Reality,* tr. Fabrizio Pregadio.
ATC	*Awakening to the Tao,* Liu I-ming, tr. Thomas Cleary.
ATS1–2	*Asrār al-Tawḥīd fī Maqāmāt al-Shaykh Abī Sa'īd,* 2 vols., M. ibn Munavvar, ed. & intro. M. Rażā Shafā'ī Kadkanī.
AWMG	*Ayyuhā al-Walad,* Ḥajjat al-Islām Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, intro. ʿAlī Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAlī Qurah Dāghī.
AYA	*The Holy Qur'ān,* tr. & comm. ʿAbdullah Yūsuf ʿAlī.
AZJW	*The A to Z of Jainism,* Kristi Wiley.
AZPD	*A to Z Photo Dictionary,* Mark Schumacher.
BBH	*The Book of Balance and Harmony,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
BBHE	*Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism,* L.M. Joshi.
BCB1–3	*Breviarium Chaldaicum,* 3 vols., P. Bedjan.
BDC	*The Book of Divine Consolation of the Blessed Angela of Foligno,* tr. M. Steegman.
BE	*The Book of Enoch,* tr. R.H. Charles.
BESA	*Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis,* N. Hanif.
BESW	*Black Elk: The Sacred Ways of a Lakota*, Wallace Black Elk & William Lyon. See *Acknowledgements.*
BGPC	*The Gospel of Buddha,* Paul Carus.
BJ	*Bahāristān,* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī.
BLAW	*The Bowl of Light,* Hank Wesselman.
BLB	*The Book of the Lover and the Beloved,* Ramón Lull, tr. E. Allison Peers.
BLD1–3	*Buddhist Legends,* 3 vols., Buddhaghosa, tr. E.W. Burlingame.
BNUS	*Buddha Nature,* Arya Maitreya, comm. Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé, expl. Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, tr. R. Fuchs.
BOS	*Badāyi',* ed. & tr. Lucas White King.
BSB	*Bhīkhā Sāhib kī Bānī.*
BSEC	*Buddhist Scriptures,* ed. & tr. Edward Conze.
BSOAS	*The Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.
BSPS	*Bulleh Shah,* J.R. Puri & T.R. Shangari.
BSS	*Bhīkhā Sāhib kī Shabdāvalī.*
BTOT	*The Buddhist Teaching of Totality,* Garma C.C. Chang.

BWIC	*Ibn ʿAta' Illah: The Book of Wisdom,* tr. V. Danner, and *Kwaja Abdullah Ansari: Intimate Conversations,* tr. W. Thackston.
CAMI	*Chinese Art,* Patricia Bjaaland Welch.
CATK	*Court Art of the Tang,* Patricia Karetzky.
CBBF	*Chandra Bhān Brahman – Life and Works,* A.H. Fārooquī.
CBD	*The Conference of the Birds,* Farid ud-Din Attar, tr. Afkham Darbandi & Dick Davis. See *Acknowledgements.*
CCED	*Cosmos and Community,* Livia Kohn.
CDBB	*The Connected Discourses of the Buddha,* 2 vols., tr. Bhikkhu Bodhi. See *Acknowledgements.*
CDSV	*The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English,* Geza Vermes (2004). See *Acknowledgements.*
CEUI	"Christliche Evangelientexte in der Überlieferung der iranisch-manichäischen Literatur," W. Sundermann.
CH	*The Clementine Homilies,* tr. Thomas Smith *et al.*
CNRB	*10,000 Chinese Numbers,* Roy Bates.
CPM	*The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans,* tr. E.S. Drower.
CPS	*Commentaire sur les paradoxes des soufis (Sharh-e Shathîyât),* Ruzbehan Baqli Shirazi, ed. Henry Corbin.
CR	*The Clementine Recognitions,* tr. Thomas Smith.
CTMP	*The Book of Chuang Tzu,* tr. Martin Palmer.
CTSS	*The Essential Chuang Tzu,* ed. & tr. Sam Hamill & J.P. Seaton.
CTT	*Chuang Tzu,* tr. Herbert Giles.
CU	*The Cloud of Unknowing,* tr. William Johnston.
CUCW	*The Cloud of Unknowing,* tr. Clifton Wolters.
CWCT	*The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu,* tr. Burton Watson.
CWJC1–3	*The Complete Works of Saint John of the Cross,* 3 vols., ed. & tr. E. Allison Peers.
CWLT	*The Complete Works of Lao Tzu,* tr. & elucidated Ni Hua-Ching.
CWT1–3	*The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila,* 3 vols., tr. Kieran Kavanaugh & Otilio Rodriquez.
CWTA1–3	*The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus,* 3 vols., ed. & tr. E. Allison Peers.
DASN	*Dīvān-i ʿAṭṭār,* incl. *Qaṣā'id, Tarjīʿāt, va Ghazaliyāt,* ed. Saʿīd Nafīsī.
DBRD	*Dialogues of the Buddha,* Part I, tr. T.W. Rhys Davids.
DCBP	*The Dhammapada and Commentary,* tr. Nārada Thera, ed. Bhikkhu Pesala.
DF	*Divine Flashes,* Fakhruddin ʿIraqi, tr. W.C. Chittick & P.L. Wilson.
DFQM	*Dīwān ibn al-Fāriḍ,* ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī Sharaf al-Dīn Abū al-Qāsim al-Miṣrī.
DGG1–2	*Dasam Sri Guru Granth Sāhib Jī,* 2 vols.
DH	*A Dictionary of Hinduism,* Margaret & James Stutley.

DHA	*Dīvān-i Khwājah Ḥāfiẓ Shīrāzī,* ed. Abū al-Qāsim Anjavī Shīrāzī.
DHK1–2	*Daoism Handbook,* 2 vols., ed. Livia Kohn.
DHM	*Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ.*
DHSG	*Dīvān-i Ḥakīm Sanā'ī Ghazanvī,* ed. Badīʿ al-Zamān Furūzānfar.
DHWC	*The Dīvān-i-Ḥāfiẓ,* 2 vols., tr. H. Wilberforce Clarke.
DIH	*Dīvān-i Ḥāfiẓ,* ed. Qāzi Sajjād Ḥusayn.
DJRJ	*Dīvān-i Jāmī,* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, ed. Muḥammad Rawshan.
DKK	*Dīvān-i Kamāl al-Dīn Masʿūd-i Khujandī,* ed. ʿAzīz Dawlatābādī.
DL	*Divine Light,* Maharaj Charan Singh.
DLTM	*The Dalai Lamas on Tantra,* tr. Glenn Mullin.
DM	*Discourses of Rumi,* tr. A.J. Arberry, adap. Doug Marman.
DNK1–5	*Drops of Nectar,* 5 vols., tr. Andreas Kretschmar. See *Acknowledgements.*
DNKR	*Dīvān-i Ashʿār-i Nāṣir-i Khusraw Qubādiyānī,* ed. S.N.A. Taqvī.
DOI	*A Dictionary of Islam,* T.P. Hughes.
DOL	*The Dawn of Light,* Maharaj Sawan Singh.
DPMM	*The Dhammapada: A Collection of Verses,* tr. F. Max Müller.
DPN	*The Dhammapada,* Narada Thera.
DPR	*The Dhammapada,* tr. S Radhakrishnan.
DRA	*Discourses of Rūmī,* tr. & comm. A.J. Arberry.
DRB	*Douay-Rheims Bible,* tr. into English from the Latin Vulgate.
DSMR	*Dīvān-i Kāmil-i Shams-i Maghribī,* Muḥammad Shīrīn Maghribī.
DSSU	*Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered,* Robert Eisenman & Michael Wise.
DSZ	*The Divine Songs of Zarathustra,* I.J.S. Taraporewala.
DVKS	*The Doctrine of Vibration,* Mark Dyczkowski.
DZ1–1487	*Dàozàng,* refers to the *Zhèngtǒng dàozàng,* 1487 titles.
EBRB	*Encyclopedia of Buddhism,* 2 vols., ed. Robert Buswell.
ECMK	*Early Chinese Mysticism,* Livia Kohn.
ECTP	*Early Chinese Texts on Painting,* Susan Bush & Ilsio-yen Shih.
EDSB	*Early Daoist Scriptures,* Stephen Bokenkamp.
EDYF	*Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga,* Georg Feuerstein.
EGPW	*Nāgārjuna on the Six Perfections,* Ārya Nāgārjuna, tr. Bhikshu Dharmamitra.
EIM	*Early Islamic Mysticism,* Michael Sells.
EKD	*The Early Kabbalah,* Joseph Dan & Ronald Kiener.
ELCT	"The Eighteen Lohan of Chinese Buddhist Temples," T. Watters.
EPR1–2	*St Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan,* 2 vols., C.W. Mitchell, A. A. Bevan & F.C. Burkitt.
ESP1–2	*An Encyclopedia of Shamanism,* 2 vols., Christina Pratt.
ETCA	"The Excerpta ex Theodoto," R.P. Casey.
ETTC	*Esoteric Tao Teh Ching,* Hua-Ching Ni.
FCWM	*Fools Crow: Wisdom and Power,* Thomas Mails. See *Acknowledgements.*

FFNA	*Fawā'id al-Fu'ād,* Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā', Kvājah Amīr Ḥasan ʿAlā Sijzī, Khvājah Ḥasan Śānī Niẓāmī.
FKG	*The Feats of the Knowers of God,* Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad-e Aflākī, tr. John O'Kane. See *Acknowledgements.*
FLI	*Farhang-i Lughāt va-Iṣṭilāḥāt va-Taʿbīrāt-i ʿIrfānī,* Sayyid Jaʿfar Sajjādī.
FLML	*The Fire of Love and The Mending of Life,* Richard Rolle, tr. Richard Misyn, ed. Frances Comper.
FLRR	*The Fire of Love,* Richard Rolle, tr. Clifton Wolters.
FMIA1–9	*Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah,* 9 vols., Ibn al-ʿArabī, ed. Aḥmad S. al-Dīn.
FNI1–15	*Farhang-i Nūrbakhsh: Iṣṭilāḥāt-i Taṣawwuf,* 15 vols., Dr Javād Nūrbakhsh.
FSC	*Four Sufi Classics,* tr. E. Fitzgerald, W.H.T. Gairdner & D. Pendlebury.
FSHM	*Pseudo-Macarius,* tr. George Maloney.
GBS1–12	*The Golden Bough,* 12 vols., James Frazer.
GCI	*A Gallery of Chinese Immortals,* tr. Lionel Giles.
GEIR	"Guanxiu and Exotic Imagery in Rakan Paintings," Masako Watanabe.
GGG	*From Glory to Glory,* ed. & tr. H. Musurillo.
GIP	*The Graces of Interior Prayer,* A. Poulain, tr. L.L.Y. Smith.
GJB	*The Gnostic John the Baptizer,* G.R.S. Mead.
GKYB	*Gorakhnāth and the Kānphaṭa Yogīs,* G.W. Briggs.
GMU	"Geburt und Entsendung des manichäischen Urmenschen," W.B. Henning.
GRAC	*Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical,* Walter Burkert.
GRG	*The Gulistan or Rose Garden of Sadi,* tr. Edward Rehatsek.
GRS	*Maśnavī-i Gulshan-i Rāz,* Maḥmūd Shabistarī, ed. A.M. Mullāyrī.
GRSS	*Gulshan-i Raz,* ed. & tr. E.H. Whinfield.
GS	*The Gnostic Scriptures,* Bentley Layton.
GSR	*Gnosis on the Silk Road,* tr. H-J. Klimkeit.
GST	*Glossary of Sufi Technical Terms,* ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qāshāni, tr. Nabil Safwat (English).
GSTA	*Glossary of Sufi Technical Terms,* ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī, tr. Nabil Safwat (Arabic).
GTE1–3	*The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment,* 3 vols., Tsong-kha-pa, tr. Lamrim Chenmo Translation Committee.
GVM	*The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God,* G. Widengren.
HAG	*Hermetica,* ed. & tr. Walter Scott.
HAV1–2	*The Hymns of the Atharvaveda,* 2 vols., Ralph Griffith.
HCW	*Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* tr. Columba Hart.
HDAV	*History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas,* A.L. Basham.

HDSW	*The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō,* tr. N. Waddell & Masao Abe.
HEDA	*The Hymns and Homilies of Ephraim the Syrian and the Demonstrations of Aphrahat the Persian Sage,* tr. J. Gwynn.
HETI	"The Heart: The Eye and Temple of the Imaginal," Hugh Urban.
HGCH	*Hermetica,* tr. Brian Copenhaver.
HHG	*The First Book of the Ḥadīqatu'l-Ḥaqīqat,* tr. J. Stephenson (English).
HHGP	*The First Book of the Ḥadīqatu'l-Ḥaqīqat,* J. Stephenson (Persian).
HJAR	*A History of the Jains,* A.K. Roy.
HLT	*The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler of Strasbourg,* tr. Susanna Winkworth.
HMEN	*The History of Music,* 5 vols., Emil Naumann, tr. F. Praeger.
HMV	*W.B. Henning Memorial Volume,* ed. Mary Boyce & Ilya Gershevitch.
HRV1–2	*The Hymns of the Ṛgveda,* 2 vols., tr. R.T.H. Griffith.
HSB	*Hadith Sahih al-Bukhari,* tr. Muhsin Khan.
HYP	*Hatha Yoga Pradipika,* tr. Pancham Sinh.
HYPM	*Hatha Yoga Pradipika,* Swami Muktibodhananda & Swami Satyananda Saraswati.
HYY	*Harmonizing Yin and Yang,* tr. Eva Wong.
IC	*The Imitation of Christ,* Thomas à Kempis, tr. R. Whitford (*c.*1530), ed. Harold Gardiner.
ICTK	*The Imitation of Christ,* Thomas à Kempis, tr. Leo Sherley Price.
ID	*Icanchu's Drum,* Lawrence Sullivan.
IDL	*Introduction to the Devout Life,* Francis de Sales, tr. M. Day.
IEHO	"Introduction to R. Hayim Vital and his Treatise *Etz Hayim* (and to) the *Sha'ar haHaqdamot,*" tr. M. Kallus & B. Ogren.
IIAS39	*Newsletter 39* (December 2005), International Institute for Asian Studies.
IPEC	*Illuminating the Path to Enlightenment,* Tenzin Gyatso, tr. Geshe Thupten Jinpa.
ISC	*Immortal Sisters,* ed. & tr. Thomas Cleary.
ISWW	*In Search of the Way,* Flora Wood.
ITCA	*Illustrated Tirthankar Charitra,* ed. Shri Amar Muni *et al.*
ITSL	*An Introduction to the Tamil Siddhas,* Layne Little.
IVRS	*Iboga: The Visionary Root of African Shamanism,* Vincent Ravalec, Mallendi & Agnès Paicheler.
JB	*The Jerusalem Bible* (1966). See *Acknowledgements.*
JBLB	*Jainism in Buddhist Literature,* Bhagchandra Jain Bhaskar.
JCL	*Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures* in *Judaic Classics Library*. See *Acknowledgements.*
JEMS	*The Jade Emperor's Mind Seal Classic,* tr. Stuart Olson.

JLPR	*The Jew in the Lotus,* Rodger Kamenetz.
JM	*Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer,* M. Lidzbarski (German).
JMAL	"Jewish Mysticism Among the Jews of Arab/Moslem Lands," Moshe Idel.
JMH1–3	*Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr,* 3 vols., comp. Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥman ibn Abī Bakr Suyūṭī, ed. Ḥasan Zarruq *et al.*
JMM	*Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer,* M. Lidzbarski (Mandaean).
JMT	*The Jewish Mystical Tradition,* Ben Zion Bokser.
JOLG	*The Jewel Ornament of Liberation by sGam.po.pa,* tr. & ann. Herbert Guenther.
JOLK	*The Jewel Ornament of Liberation,* Gampopa, tr. Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche.
JPP1–2	*Jain Philosophy and Practice,* 2 vols., comp. Jaina Education Committee.
JSSM	*Journal for the Study of Sephardic & Mizrahi Jewry,* ed. Z. Zohar.
KA1–10	*Kashf al-Asrār va-ʿUddat al-Abrār,* 10 vols., Abū al-Fażl Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī, ed. ʿAlī Aṣghar Ḥikmat.
KB	*The Jerusalem Bible,* English text rev. & ed. Harold Fisch. See *Acknowledgements.*
KBS	*Kullīyāt-i Bulleh Shāh,* Faqīr Muḥammad.
KBSA	*Kalām-i Bulleh Shāh,* ed. Naźīr Aḥmad.
KDA	*Keshavdās Jī kī Amīghūnt.*
KFF	*Kitāb Fīhi mā Fīhi,* Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, ed. B. Furūzānfar.
KHI	*Kullīyāt-i Shaykh Fakhr al-dīn Ibrāhīm Hamadānī ʿIrāqī,* ed. Saʿīd Nafīsī.
KIFT1–4	*Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn,* 4 vols., al-Tahānawī, ed. A.H. Basaj.
KJV	*The Bible: The Authorized (King James) Version*. See *Acknowledgements.*
KM	*Kashf al-Mahjūb,* al-Hujwīrī, ed. & tr. R.A. Nicholson.
KMM	*Kashf al-Maḥjūb,* Hujwīrī, ed. V.A. Zhukovsky.
KMOZ	*Kol Mevaser ve-Omer,* M. Zelikson.
KNJI	*Khuddaka Nikaya,* tr. John Ireland.
KNTB	*Khuddaka Nikaya,* tr. Thanissaro Bhikkhu. See *Acknowledgements.*
KOT	*The Kephalaia of the Teacher,* Iain Gardner.
KPA	*The Koran: With a Parallel Arabic Text,* tr. N.J. Dawood.
KSA	*Akhrāvatī: Kabīr Sahab kā Pūrā Granth.*
KSD1–10	*Kullīyāt-i Shams yā Dīvān-i Kabīr,* 10 vols., ed. B. Furūzānfar.
KSMF	*Kullīyāt-i Saʿdī,* Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Saʿdi, ed. M.A. Foroughi.
KSMN	*Kullīyāt-i Ṣā'ib,* Ṣā'ib Tabrīzī.
KSS	*Kabīr Sākhī Sangrah*.
KSSL	*Kashmir Shaivism: The Secret Supreme,* Swami Lakshman Jee.

KSSS	*Kullīyāt-i Saʿdī,* Shaykh Muṣliḥ Dīn Saʿdī Shīrazī.
KTJ	*Kitāb al-Taʿrīfāt,* al-Jurjānī, ed. ʿĀdil Anwar Khiḍr.
KTL	*The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion,* G. Widengren.
KTMH	*Kitâb al Tawâsîn,* Manṣoûr al-Ḥallâj, ed. & tr. Louis Massignon.
KTS	*Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah,* Sulamī, ed. Johannes Pedersen.
KWGK	*The Karmapa: Official Website of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa*.
KWGN	*Kabir: The Weaver of God's Name,* V.K. Sethi.
LABN	"The 18 Lohans (Arhats)," unattributed.
LDAC	*The Ladder of Divine Ascent,* John Klimakos, tr. Archimandrite Lazarus.
LDT	*Letters of Direction,* Abbé de Tourville, tr. Lucy Menzies.
LG	*La Literatura de los Guaraníes,* León Cádogan.
LGFS	*The Love of God,* Saint Francis de Sales, tr. Vincent Kerns.
LGMD	*Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī,* Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Dārābī.
LMTH	*The Life of Marpa the Translator,* Tsang Nyön Heruka, tr. Chögyam Trugpa *et al.*
LMTT	*The Life of Milarepa,* Lobsang P. Lhalungpa.
LPH	*The Ladder of Perfection,* Walter Hilton, tr. Leo Sherley Price. See *Acknowledgements.*
LPSW	"Leadership in Pre-European Maori Society," Maharaia Winiata.
LSHK	*The Saddharma-Pundarîka,* tr. H. Kern.
LSMT	*The Lankavatara Sutra,* tr. D.T. Suzuki.
LTS	*Lawā'iḥ,* ʿAbd-ur-Raḥmān Jāmī, tr. E.H. Whinfield & Mīrzā M. Ḳazvīnī (English).
LTSP	*Lawā'iḥ,* ʿAbd-ur-Raḥmān Jāmī, tr. E.H. Whinfield & Mīrzā M. Ḳazvīnī (Persian).
LXX	*The Septuagint,* C3rd–2nd BCE (Greek).
M1–	*A Catalogue of the Iranian Manuscripts in Manichaean Script in the German Turfan Collection,* Mary Boyce.
MAA	"The Mythological Acts of the Apostles," A.S. Lewis.
MAG	*Mishkāt al-Anwār,* al-Ghazālī.
MARB	*Mashrab al-Arwāḥ,* Rūzbihān Baqlī, ed. ʿĀsim Ibrāhim al-Kayālī.
MASA1–2	*Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn,* 2 vols., al-Aflākī al-ʿĀrifī, ed. Taḥsīn Yāzījī.
MBB	*Ein Manichäisches Bet- und Beichtbuch,* W.B. Henning.
MCLM	*Manu's Code of Law,* Patrick Olivelle.
MDBB	*Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha,* tr. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, ed. & rev. Bhikkhu Bodhi. See *Acknowledgements.*
MDI	*Mystical Dimensions of Islam,* Annemarie Schimmel.
MEM	"Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism," G. Widengren.
MGK	*The Meaning of the Glorious Koran,* Marmaduke Pickthall.
MH	"Ein Manichäisches Henochbuch," W.B. Henning.

MHCP	*The Manichaean Hymn-Cycles in Parthian,* tr. M. Boyce.
MHK	*Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāyah wa-Miftāḥ al-Kifāyah,* ʿIzz al-Dīn Maḥmūd Qāshānī, ed. Jalāl al-Dīn Humāʾī.
MHN	*Morals for the Heart,* tr. Bruce Lawrence.
MJR1–8	*The Mathnawī of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī,* 8 vols., ed., tr. & comm. R.A. Nicholson.
MKAK	*Meditation and the Kabbalah,* Aryeh Kaplan.
ML	*Manichaean Literature,* J.P. Asmussen.
MM	*Mani and Manichaeism,* G. Widengren.
MM1–3	"Mitteliranische Manichaica aus Chinesisch-Turkestan," 3 vols., F.C. Andreas & W.B. Henning.
MMA	*Monk of Mount Athos,* Archimandrite Sophrony, tr. R. Edmonds.
MMJA	Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsāʾī al-Mujlī, ed. Aḥmad Shīrāzī.
MNFA	*Muṣībāt Nāmah,* Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār Nīshābūrī, ed. Nūrānī Viṣāl.
MOHE	*The Mystical Origins of Hasidism,* Rachel Elior.
MOI	*The Mystics of Islam,* R.A. Nicholson.
MP1–2	*Mystical Poems of Rumi,* 2 vols., tr. A.J. Arberry.
MPB	*A Manichaean Psalm-Book,* Part II, ed. & tr. C.R.C. Allberry.
MPM	*Mittelpersische und parthische kosmogonische und Parabeltexte der Manichäer,* Werner Sundermann.
MRG1–7	*Majmūʿat Rasāʾil (Collection of Letters),* 7 vols., al-Ghazālī.
MRJA	"Maori Religion," Johannes Andersen.
MRM1–2	*Maori Religion and Mythology,* 2 parts, Elsdon Best.
MRS1–6	*Mahābhārata,* 6 vols., tr. Ramnarayandatta Shastri Pandeya.
MRSY	"The Siddha," Paul Muller-Ortega.
MSDN	*Manu Samhita*, tr. M.N. Dutt.
MSGK	*Music in the Sky,* Michele Martin.
MTAN	*Manṭiq al-Ṭayr, Shaykh ʿAṭṭār Nīshābūrī,* ed. Muḥammad Rażā Shafāʿī Kadkanī.
MTGS	*Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism,* Gershom Scholem.
MTIN	*Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Nineveh,* tr. A.J. Wensinck.
MUM	*Minor Upanishads,* tr. Swami Madhavananda.
MUSV	*Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad,* tr. Swāmī Vimalānanda.
MV1–12	*The Mahabharata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa,* 12 vols., tr. Kisari Mohan Ganguli.
MZBS	*Manual of Zen Buddhism,* D.T. Suzuki.
NAKU	*Niyamasara,* Shri Kunda Kunda Āchārya, ed. & tr. Uggar Sain.
NBST	*Nārada Bhakti Sūtras,* Swāmī Tyāgīśānanda.
NEI	*The New Encyclopedia of Islam,* Cyril Glassé.
NEL	*Nourishing the Essence of Life,* tr. Eva Wong.
NHS11	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XI, ed. Douglas Parrott.
NHS20	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XX, vol. 1, ed. Bentley Layton.
NHS21	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XXI, vol. 2, ed. Bentley Layton.

NHS22	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XXII, vol. 1, ed. Harold Attridge.
NHS26	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XXVI, ed. Stephen Emmel.
NHS27	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XXVII, ed. Douglas Parrott.
NHS28	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XXVIII, ed. Charles Hedrick.
NHS33	*Nag Hammadi Studies* XXXIII, ed. M. Waldstein & F. Wisse.
NHSM	*Nag Hammadi Scriptures,* ed. Marvin Meyer.
NJB	*The New Jerusalem Bible* (1985). See *Acknowledgements.*
NKD	*Nāṣir-i Khusraw,* tr. P.L. Wilson & G.R. Aavani.
NR1–2	*The Nestorians and Their Rituals,* 2 vols., G.P. Badger.
NTA1–2	*New Testament Apocrypha,* 2 vols., E. Hennecke, tr. R.McL. Wilson, ed. W. Schneemelcher.
NUJ	*Nafaḥāt al-Uns,* ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, ed. Mahdī Tawhīdīpūr.
OCM	*The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition,* A. Louth.
ODB	*Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism,* Damien Keown.
OKGS	*Origins of the Kabbalah,* Gershom Scholem, tr. Allan Arkush.
OSD	*The Odes of Solomon,* John Davidson.
OSS	*Origen: The Song of Songs,* tr. R.P. Lawson.
OSSS	*The Odes of Sheikh Muṣlihu-d-Dīn Saʿdī Shīrāzī,* Part I *(Ṭayyibāt),* ed. Lucas White King.
OTP1–2	*The Old Testament Pseudoepigrapha,* 2 vols., ed. J.H. Charlesworth.
PAH	"Some Parthian Abecedarian Hymns," M. Boyce.
PAKU	*Pravachansara,* Acharya Kundkund, tr. A.N. Upadhye.
PBD	*Buddhist Dictionary,* Ven. Nyanatiloka.
PCT1–5	*The Philokalia,* 4 vols., ed. & tr. G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, Kallistos Ware. See *Acknowledgements.*
PCW1–10	*Philo,* 10 vols., tr. F.H. Colson & G.H. Whitaker.
PCWF	*The Pilgrim Continues His Way,* tr. R.M. French.
PDPM	*The Path of Discrimination,* tr. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli.
PEP	*Plotinus: The Enneads,* tr. Stephen MacKenna, abr. John Dillon.
PES	*Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis,* tr. F. Williams.
PG1–161	*Patrologiae cursus completus . . . Series Graeca,* 161 vols., ed. J.-P. Migne.
PMAH	*The Pantheistic Monism of Ibn al-ʿArabi,* Abdul Qadir Husaini.
PMS1–5	*Philosophy of the Masters,* 5 vols., Huzur Maharaj Sawan Singh.
PNC	*A Pair of Naṣoraean Commentaries,* tr. E.S. Drower.
PNW	*The Power of the Name,* Kallistos Ware.
POM	*The Path of the Masters,* Julian Johnson.
PPL	*Plato: Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII,* tr. Walter Hamilton.
PPVM	*The Path of Purification,* Buddhaghosa, tr. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli.
PSB1–3	*Paltū Sāhib kī Bānī,* 3 vols.
PSHC	*Physician of the Soul, Healer of the Cosmos,* Lawrence Fine.
PSW	*The Prodigal Soul,* John Davidson.
PTMR	*Perush ʿal ha-Torah,* Menaḥem Recanati.

PTSA1–6	*The Aṅguttara-nikāya,* 6 vols., ed. R. Morris & E. Hardy.
PTSD1–3	*The Dīgha-nikāya,* 3 vols., ed. T.W. Rhys Davids & J.E. Carpenter.
PTSDA1–5	*The Commentary on the Dhammapada,* 5 vols., ed. H.C. Norman & H. Smith.
PTSI	*Itivuttaka,* ed. E. Windisch.
PTSM1–4	*The Majjhima-nikāya,* 4 vols., ed. V. Trenckner & R. Chalmers.
PTSN	*Suttanipāta,* ed. D. Anderson & Helmer Smith.
PTSP1–2	*Paṭisambhidāmagga,* 2 vols., ed. A.C. Taylor.
PTSQ	*Milindapañha*, ed. V. Trenckner.
PTSS1–6	*Samyutta-nikāya,* 6 vols., ed. L. Feer.
PTSU	*Udāna,* ed. P. Steinthal.
PTSV	*The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa,* ed. C.A.F. Rhys Davids.
PTTC	*Practical Taoism,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
PU	*The Principal Upaniṣads,* tr. S. Radhakrishnan.
RAH	*Refutation of All Heresies,* Hippolytus, tr. S.D.F. Salmond.
RBJS	*Relics of the Buddha,* John Strong.
RCML	*Śrī Rāmacaritamānasa,* Tulasīdāsa.
RKA	*Rashf al-Alḥāẓ fī Kashf al-Alfāẓ,* Sharaf al-Dīn Ḥusayn ibn Ulfatī Tabrīzī, ed. Māyil-i Hiravī.
RLI	*Risālah-yi Lamaʿāt va-Risālah-yi Iṣṭilāḥāt,* Fakhr al-Dīn ʿIrāqī.
RLRI	*Risālah-ʾi Lamʿāt va Risālah-ʾi Iṣṭilaḥāt,* Fakhr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ʿIrāqī, ed. Javād Nūrbakhsh.
RM	*Rabiʿa the Mystic and her Fellow-Saints in Islam,* M. Smith.
RMHL	*Rabbi Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto u-Venei Doro: Osef Iggerot u-te´udot,* 2 vols., Simon Ginzburg.
RMI	*Readings from the Mystics of Islam,* Margaret Smith.
RMM	*The Revelations of Mechthild of Magdeburg,* tr. L. Menzies.
RMP	*A Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian,* Mary Boyce.
RNV1–4	*Rasāʾil Shāh Niʿmatullāhī Valī,* 4 vols., ed. Javād Nūrbakhsh.
RPTT	*Rabad of Posquières,* Isadore Twersky.
RQQQ	*Al-Risālah al-Qushayrīyah,* Abū al-Qāsim Qushayrī, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī.
RRS	*The Revival of Religious Sciences,* al Ghazāli, tr. Bankey Behari.
RSV	*The Holy Bible: The Revised Standard Version* (1952).
RTG	*Rawḍat al-Ṭālibīn,* Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī.
RV	*The Rig Veda: An Anthology,* tr. & ann. Wendy O'Flaherty.
RVTP	*Richard of St. Victor: The Twelve Patriarchs, the Mystical Ark, Book Three of the Trinity,* tr. Grover Zinn.
SAKH	*Sufi Aphorisms: Kitāb al-Ḥikam,* tr. Victor Danner.
SBAT	*Sar Bachan: An Abstract of the Teachings of Soami Ji Maharaj*.
SBB	*Sahajobāī kī Bānī.*

SBCP	*A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy,* tr. Wing-tsit Chan.
SBCP	*Sant Bānī.*
SBE22	*Jaina Sutras,* Part I, tr. Hermann Jacobi.
SBE25	*The Laws of Manu,* tr. George Bühler.
SBE35–36	*The Questions of King Milinda,* 2 vols., tr. T.W. Rhys Davids.
SBE45	*Jaina Sutras,* Part II, tr. Hermann Jacobi.
SBE49	*Buddhist Mahâyâna Texts,* tr. E.B. Cowell, F. Max Müller & J. Takakusu.
SBJT	*The Schocken Book of Jewish Mystical Testimonies,* Louis Jacobs.
SBP	*Sār Bachan Chhand-Band (Sār Bachan Poetry),* Swāmī Shiv Dayāl Singh.
SBPS	*Sar Bachan Poetry (Selections),* Soami Shiv Dayal Singh.
SBSU	*Sā'īn Bulleh Shāh,* Radha Soami Satsang Beas (Urdu).
SCSB	*Spiritual Canticle of the Soul and the Bridegroom Christ,* St. John of the Cross, tr. David Lewis, corr. Benedict Zimmerman.
SDSL	*Sky Dancer,* K. Dowman.
SDST	*Selected Poems from the Dīvāni Shamsi Tabrīz,* ed. & tr. R.A. Nicholson.
SDT1–4	*Shōbōgenzō,* 4 vols., tr. Gudo Wafu Nishijima & Chodo Cross.
SER	*The Spiritual Espousals,* Jan van Ruysbroek, tr. Eric Colledge.
SFHA	*Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam Ibn al-'Arabī,* Dāwūd Qayṣarī.
SG	*Spiritual Gems,* Maharaj Sawan Singh Ji.
SGFC	*The Secret of the Golden Flower,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
SGHV	*Sha'ar ha-Gilgulim,* Ḥayyim Vital, ed. Yehudah Ashlag.
SGR	*Mafātiḥ al-I'jāz fī Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz-i Maḥmūd Shabistarī,* Shaykh Muḥammad Lāhījī, ed. Kayvān Samī'ī.
SHCP	*A Short History of Chinese Philosophy,* Fu Yu-Lan, ed. D. Bodde.
SHME	*Fifty Spiritual Homilies of St. Macarius the Egyptian,* tr. A.J. Mason.
SIM	*Studies in Islamic Mysticism,* R.A. Nicholson.
SJEB	*Shingon,* Taikō Yamasaki, tr. R. & C. Peterson.
SKS	*Self-Knowledge (Atmabodha),* tr. & comm. Swami Nikhilananda.
SKSN	*Sha'ar Kevod ha-Shem,* Ephraim ben Israel al-Naqawah.
SL	*Spiritual Letters,* Baba Jaimal Singh Ji (1998).
SLJ	*The Seven Lights,* Adin Steinsaltz & Josy Eisenberg.
SLO	*Spiritual Letters,* Baba Jaimal Singh Ji (1984).
SLSS	*Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra,* D.T. Suzuki.
SMIK1–13	*The Sufi Message of Hazrat Inayat Khan,* 13 vols., Hazrat Inayat Khan.
SMWE	*The Shaman and the Medicine Wheel*, Evelyn Eaton.
SNVF	*The Sutta-Nipâta,* tr. V. Fausböll.
SOA	*Sufis of Andalusia,* tr. R.W.J. Austin.

SOU	*Signs of The Unseen,* tr. W.M.Thackston Jr.
SPDS	*The Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra,* tr. Buddhist Text Translation Society.
SPK	*The Sufi Path of Knowledge,* William Chittick. See *Acknowledgements.*
SPL	*The Sufi Path of Love,* William Chittick. See *Acknowledgements.*
SPLT	*Saint Paltu: His Life and Teachings,* Isaac Ezekiel.
SPZ	"Syrische Poesien," P.P. Zingerle.
SR1–6	*The Sikh Religion,* 6 vols., M.A. Macauliffe.
SRHI	*The Shiite Religion,* D.M. Donaldson.
SRVU	*A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga,* tr. Jikidō Takasaki.
SSE1–15	*Sufi Symbolism: The Nurbakhsh Encyclopedia of Sufi Terminology,* 15 vols., Dr Javad Nurbakhsh, tr. T. Graham *et al.* See *Acknowledgements.*
SSI1–10	*Sacred Songs of India,* 10 vols., V.K. Subramanian.
SSJR	*The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage, The Sparkling Stone, The Book of Supreme Truth,* John of Ruysbroeck, tr. C.A. Wynschenk.
SSJV	*Samaṇ Suttaṁ,* comp. Jinēndra Varṇī, tr. T.K. Tukol & K.K. Dixit.
SSKK	*Samayasara,* Shri Kunda Kunda Acharya, tr. J.L. Jaini.
SSSE	*The Song of Songs of Solomon,* Madame Guyon, tr. J. Metcalf.
SSTK	*Seven Steps to the Tao,* Livia Kohn.
SSTT	*Ācārya Samantabhadra's Svayambhūstotra,* Vijay K. Jain.
SSV	*The Siva Samhita,* tr. Rai Bahadur Srisa Chandra Vasu.
STHT	*Shōbōgenzō,* Eihei Dogen, tr. Hubert Nearman.
SUTP	*The Seal of the Unity of the Three,* Fabrizio Pregadio.
SVSL	*ʿUmar ibn al-Fâriḍ: Sufi Verse, Saintly Life,* tr. Th. Emil Homerin.
SVWT	*Secret of the Vajra World,* Reginald Ray.
T1–100	*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō,* 100 vols., ed. Takakusu Junjirō & Watanabe Kaigokyu.
TAMS	*Triloksar,* tr. Vishudhmatiji.
TAN1–2	*Tadhkiratu 'l-Awliya,* 2 parts, ed. R.A. Nicholson.
TAT	*Taṣawwuf va-Adabīyāt-i Taṣawwuf,* Y.E. Bertels, tr. Sirus Izadi.
TBJK	*Traditions of the Bible,* James Kugel.
TBLD	*The Long Discourses of the Buddha,* tr. Maurice Walshe. See *Acknowledgements.*
TCC1–4	*The Taoist Classics,* 4 vols., Thomas Cleary.
TEAK	*The Taoist Experience: An Anthology,* Livia Kohn.
TEG	*Taoism: An Essential Guide,* Eva Wong.
TGH1–3	*Thrice-Greatest Hermes,* 3 vols., G.R.S. Mead.
TGLE	*Tao, The Great Luminant,* tr. Evan Morgan.
THS	*Ṭarāʾiq al-Ḥaqāʾiq,* Shīrāzī, ed. M.J. Maḥjūb.
THSK	*The Triadic Heart of Śiva,* Paul Muller-Ortega.

TMC1–3	*Türkische Manichaica aus Chotscho,* 3 vols., Albert von Le Coq.
TMED	*Taoist Meditation,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
TMG	"The Tohunga Maori," Walter Gudgeon.
TMLT	*Taoist Meditation and Longevity Techniques,* ed. Livia Kohn.
TMPS	*Taoist Mystical Philosophy,* Livia Kohn.
TMSC	*A Treasury of Mahāyāna Sūtras,* ed. G.C.C. Chang.
TMT1–10	*A Treasury of Mystic Terms,* Parts I–II, 10 vols., ed. John Davidson.
TMU	*Thirty Minor Upaniṣads,* tr. K. Narayanasvami Aiyar.
TOS	*Tayyibat,* tr. Lucas White King.
TPA1–2	*Traditions of the Prophet (Ahadith*), 2 vols., Dr Javad Nurbakhsh, tr. L. Lewisohn & T. Graham.
TPEF	*Tantra: The Path of Ecstasy,* Georg Feuerstein.
TPEQ	*The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters,* Stephen Eskildsen. See *Acknowledgements.*
TRAK	*Tohunga – The Revival,* Samuel Timoti Robinson. See *Acknowledgements.*
TRI	*Taoism: The Road to Immortality,* John Blofeld.
TRW	*Tending the Roots of Wisdom,* comp. Hong Yingming, tr. Paul White & Frank Jiang.
TS	*The Teachings of Silvanus,* J. Zandee.
TSAA	*Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah,* Anṣārī, ed. ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Ḥabībī.
TSR	*The Triumphal Sun,* Annemarie Schimmel.
TSWT	"The 36 – Who Are They?" Rabbi Raymond A. Zwerin.
TT1–2	*The Texts of Taoism,* 2 vols., tr. James Legge.
TTCS	*Tao Te Ching,* tr. Jonathan Star.
TTCT	*Tao Te Ching: A New Translation,* tr. Ch'u Ta-Kao.
TTQ	*The Thousand and Twelve Questions,* E.S. Drower.
TTT1–10	"Türkische Turfantexte," 10 parts, W. Bang, A. von Gabain, T. Kowalski, G.R. Rachmati, W. Winter *et al.*
TTW	*Teachings of the Tao,* tr. Eva Wong.
TVW1–5	*The Treatise on the Great Virtue of Wisdom of Nāgārjuna,* 5 vols., tr. Étienne Lamotte & Gelongma Karma Migme Chōdrōn.
TWW	*Tao: The Watercourse Way,* A. Watts & A. Chung-liang Huang.
TYYY	*Toldot Yaʿakov Yosef,* Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy.
UHEH	*Uniter of Heaven and Earth,* Miles Krassen.
URC	*Understanding Reality,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
VCSM	*Viveka-cūḍāmaṇi of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya,* tr. Swāmī Mādhavānanda.
VE	*The Vedic Experience,* Raimundo Panikkar.
VES	*Vitality, Energy, Spirit,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
VIN1–2	*Vedic Index of Names and Subjects,* 2 vols., A.A. Macdonell & A.B. Keith.
VSP1–2	*Verzeichniss der Sanskrit- und Prâkrit-Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin,* 2 vols., A.F. Weber.

VTP3	*Vinaya Texts, Part III, tr. T.W. Rhys Davids & H. Oldenberg.*
VYM	*Vayakhel Mosheh,* Rabbi Mosheh of Prague.
VYV	*Vasiṣṭha's Yoga,* tr. Swami Venkatesananda.
WBC1–4	*The Works of Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs,* 4 vols., tr. K. Walsh & I.M. Edmonds.
WCA1–2	*The Writings of Clement of Alexandria,* 2 vols., tr. W. Wilson.
WJMA	*The Writings of Justin Martyr and Athenagoras,* tr. M. Dods *et al.*
WLT	*The Wisdom of Laotse,* ed. & tr. Lin Yutang.
WMPT	*Kunzang Lama'i Shelung,* Patrul Rinpoche, tr. Padmakara Translation Group.
WPJ1–4	*The Works of Philo Judaeus,* 4 vols., tr. C.D. Yonge.
WPW	*The Way of a Pilgrim,* tr. R.M. French.
WTUM	*Wen-Tzu: Understanding the Mysteries,* tr. Thomas Cleary.
WZ1–3	*The Wisdom of the Zohar,* 3 vols., arr. F. Lachower & I. Tishby.
YPAA	*Āchārya-Amitagati's Yogasāra-Prābhṛta,* tr. S.C. Jain.
YSBB	*Yogasūtra of Patañjali,* tr. Bangali Baba.
YSPB	*The Yoga System of Patañjali or the Ancient Hindu Doctrine of Concentration of Mind,* tr. J.H. Woods.
YTPM	*Yoga Tantra,* H.H. Dalai Lama, Dzong-ka-ba, tr., ed. & ann. Jeffrey Hopkins.
YU	*The Yoga Upaniṣads,* tr. T.R. S'rīnivāsa Ayyaṅgār.
ZAMG	"The Zaddik as Axis Mundi in Later Judaism," Arthur Green.
ZDZP	*The Zaddik,* Samuel Dresner.
ZSDP	*Zulu Shaman,* Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa.
ZSS1–5	*The Zohar,* 5 vols., tr. Harry Sperling & Maurice Simon.
ZTHP	*The Zen Teaching of Huang Po,* tr. John Blofeld.
ZTRR	*Zen Teaching of Rinzai,* tr. Irmgard Schloegl.

7.1 Guides and Practitioners
(SCRIBES–ZŬ)

scribes (Gk. pl. *grammateis,* sg. *grammateus*) In Old Testament times, a respected and acknowledged class of writers, scholars, theologians, lawyers, and teachers of the Jewish *Torah* (Law), dealing with religious, moral, social, and legal aspects of Jewish life, and able to give advice and directives on all its aspects; those qualified to draw up documents in accordance with religious requirements; writers, town clerks; mentioned frequently in the Christian gospels in generally pejorative terms. The Greek *grammateus* (writer, scribe, scholar) is derived from *gramma* (a letter of the alphabet, writings, learning), which is from *graphō* (to write).

Social status or membership of a particular party were not prerequisites among the scribes, who were largely self-employed. After completing a long and arduous training, they were given the status of scribe, permitted to wear the long robe of a scholar,[1] were addressed as 'rabbi (Gk. *rabbi*)',[2] and given a place of honour in the synagogue.

In the gospels, the scribes and Pharisees are characteristically – though not always[3] – portrayed as hypocritical and intellectual know-it-alls, which is undoubtedly a generalized misrepresentation. The essence of the criticism is summarized in the comment:

> And they went into Capernaum; and as soon as it was the Sabbath, he (Jesus) entered into the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression: for he taught them as one with authority, and not as the scribes *(grammateis).*
>
> *Mark 1:21–22; cf. KJV, NJB*

"One with authority" means that Jesus taught from his own inner experience and knowledge of Reality. He *knew* what he was talking about. The scribes, on the other hand, who epitomized intellectual and scholarly understanding, were working from reason, in the sphere of religious concepts. In *Matthew,* incidentally, who copies from *Mark* but rearranges the material, the comment is located after Jesus' sermon on the mount,[4] a collection of Jesus' sayings that is absent from *Mark.*

Scholarly research has revealed considerable uncertainty surrounding the authenticity of the gospel sayings attributed to Jesus. But presuming that they reflect the essence of his teachings, the question arises as to why Jesus should have sought controversy by openly criticizing the self-appointed religious authorities of the day.

From a general reading of the gospels, it would seem that part of Jesus' mission was to teach the simple inner truths of spirituality to the common people. This brought him into direct conflict with the Pharisees, priests, and scribes who actually fulfilled the role of religious teachers in Jewish society on a professional basis. Jesus' difficulty with this system was twofold. Firstly, although the "scribes and Pharisees" tried to convey the teachings of

the prophets and holy men of the past, they did not really understand them. They therefore unconsciously misled people, though they were vehemently defensive of their territory when challenged:

> But alas for you, scribes *(grammateis)* and Pharisees – hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither enter yourselves, nor do you allow those who would enter to go in.
>
> *Matthew 23:13; cf. KJV, RSV*

Jesus' criticism is aimed at helping the common people free themselves from the yoke of the scribes and others, so that they could think for themselves, and understand the simplicity of pure spiritual teachings. Jesus is not the only mystic to have felt it necessary to undermine the religious authorities of the day for the sake of the common man.

Secondly, according to the gospel writer's perspective, the "scribes and Pharisees" did not actually practise what they preached:

> For I say unto you, unless your righteousness goes deeper than that of the scribes *(grammateis)* and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
>
> *Matthew 5:20; cf. JB, KJV*

And likewise:

> Alas for you, scribes *(grammateis)* and Pharisees – hypocrites!
> For you cleanse the outside of the cup and platter,
> while within they are full of extortion and intemperance.
> You blind Pharisee! First cleanse that
> which is within the cup and platter,
> that the outside may be clean also.
>
> *Matthew 23:25–26; cf. KJV*

Yet Jesus did not instruct his disciples to neglect the traditional outer practices of their Jewish faith, as taught to them by the "scribes and Pharisees". He simply advised them not to emulate their behaviour:

> Then Jesus spoke to the multitude and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes *(grammateis)* and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: therefore, whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do. But be not guided by what they do: for they preach, but do not practise. They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders, but will they lift a finger to move them? Not they! All their deeds are done for

> others to see: they wear wide phylacteries and have longer tassels on their garments, and love the place of honour at feasts, and the front seats in the synagogues, and being greeted in the market, and to have men call them 'Rabbi'. But let not yourselves be called 'Rabbi': for one is your master *(kathēgētēs),* even Christ; and all you are all brothers."
>
> *Matthew 23:1–8; cf. JB, KJV, RSV*

In all, Jesus' attitude is summarized in his comment:

> Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind:
> and if the blind lead the blind,
> both shall fall into the ditch.
>
> *Matthew 15:14, KJV*

Whether the status and role of the scribes and Pharisees at the time of Jesus was as the gospels depict, especially *Matthew,* remains a matter of debate.

See also: **Pharisees**, **priest**.

1. *Mark* 12:38.
2. *Matthew* 23:7.
3. *E.g. Mark* 12:28–34.
4. *Matthew* 7:28–29.

seer (He. *ḥozeh, roʿeh,* Gk. *horōn, blēpōn*) A person who can foretell the future; a person with supernatural powers; a person with a highly developed consciousness of the Divine; a generalized term for a prophet, a mystic, a visionary, a soothsayer, a clairvoyant, commonly used in poetry; mentioned throughout the Bible[1] (*e.g.* Samuel the seer[2]), and ancient literature everywhere; a standard position in the royal courts of old, as, for instance, Gad, the king's seer in the time of David.[3] As Philo Judaeus observes:

> The men of old would sometimes speak of the prophets *(prophētai)* as men of God *(anthrōpoi Theou)* and sometimes as seers *(horōntes).* And the names they gave were names of actual truth, and appropriate – the former to their inspiration, the latter to the wide vision of reality they possessed.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Unchangeableness of God 29; cf. PCW3 pp.80–81, WPJ1 p.370*

Seer (He. *roʿeh*) is a more ancient term for a prophet (He. *navi*):

> Formerly in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, he would say, "Come, and let us go to the seer *(roʿeh):* for he that is now called a prophet *(navi)* was formerly called a seer *(roʿeh).*"
>
> *1 Samuel 9:9; cf. KJV*

In Greek mythology, Ancaeus, the son of *Zeus* or *Poseidon,* king of the Lelegēs of Samos and helmsman of the Argo, was planting a vineyard one day, when he was told by a seer that he would never drink its wine. The prediction stayed in his mind, and when the time of harvest arrived, he took some grapes, squeezed the juice into a cup and, raising it to his lips, jested with the seer. The seer responded, "There's many a slip between the cup and the lip." At that moment, a messenger arrived, informing Ancaeus that a wild boar was on the loose, ravaging the countryside. Ancaeus put down the cup, leaving the juice untasted, left in a hurry, and was killed by the boar.

See also: **clairvoyance** (7.3), **psychic experience** (7.3), **roʿeh**, **visionary**.

1. *E.g. 1 Chronicles* 25:5; *2 Chronicles* 9:29, 33:18–19, *passim.*
2. *1 Chronicles* 9:22, 21:9, 26:28, 29:29; *1 Samuel* 9:9–19.
3. *1 Chronicles* 21:9, 29:29; *2 Chronicles* 29:25; *1 Samuel* 9:9, 22:5; *2 Samuel* 24:11.

sēng, **sēnglǚ**, **sēngrén** (C) *Lit.* A Buddhist monk *(sēng);* a monk of any tradition *(sēnglǚ, sēngrén).* See **chūjiārén**.

sensei (J), **xiānsheng** (C) *Lit.* before *(sen)* + born *(sei);* a person who is born before another; a metaphorical way of acknowledging that someone possesses superior mastery of something; an honorific or courtesy title given to anyone who is perceived as having a greater mastery of something or simply as a mark of respect for a person in authority; used for professional people such as teachers, lawyers, doctors, and priests, as well as accomplished artists, musicians, writers, martial arts teachers, and so on. As *dai-sensei,* where *dai* means 'great', *sensei* generally refers to the head of a particular profession, school, or tradition; like all Japanese honorifics, often used as a suffix to a person's name. The Chinese *xiānsheng* shares the same kanji characters (Japanese characters adapted from Chinese) as the Japanese *sensei,* and is again a title indicating esteem and respect.

In modern Japanese usage, *sensei* may be used for the official or unofficial leader of a spiritual, social, or political movement or cult. In this context, *sensei* is often used in a scathing manner by others or in the media, intending

denigration of what is perceived as the undue adulation given to the individual so designated.

In Japanese Buddhism, *sensei* can be used of any monk, regardless of position in the hierarchy. In the *Sanbō Kyōdan* school of *Zen, sensei* is used for any ordained teacher below the rank of *rōshi.* In the *Nichiren* Buddhist tradition, a branch of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism founded on the *Lotus Sūtra,* the head of the organization is called the *sensei.*[1]

See also: **rōshi**.

1. See "sensei," *Wikipedia,* ret. June 2013.

servant, **servant of God**, **servant of Yahweh** (He. *ʿeved,* Gk. *diakōn, doulos, therapōn*) In mystical and religious literature, one who has surrendered to God, and dedicated himself to His service; hence, a devotee, a contemplative, an ardent disciple; also, in the Bible and allied literature, a prophet, a messiah, Israel; conversely, the servant of the world, the servant of the devil, implying one who follows worldly or evil ways. The Greek *doulos* is more accurately translated as 'slave' or 'bond-servant'.

In the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament, and associated literature, Moses,[1] David,[2] Abraham,[3] Isaac,[4] Jacob,[5] the prophets ("your servants the prophets") collectively,[6] as well as the angels in heaven,[7] are all described as the servants of God. *3 Enoch* also gives a special place to the angel Metatron, as the servant of *Yahweh.*[8]

According to the *Wisdom of Solomon,* the holiness of Moses arose from the divine Wisdom that entered into him, giving him the strength to stand before Pharaoh:

> She (Wisdom) entered the soul
> of a servant of the Lord (Gk. *therapōn Kuriou*),
> and withstood fearsome kings with wonders and signs.
> *Wisdom of Solomon 10:16, NJB*

The *Psalms* frequently speak of "David, the servant of *Yahweh (ʿeved Yahweh)*" and "My servant *(ʿeved),* David".[9] The psalmist himself, generally presumed to have been David, addresses himself throughout as a "servant". David is heralded as the "chosen", the archetypal messiah, the spiritual and worldly king:

> I have made a covenant with My chosen,
> I have given My servant *(ʿeved)* David My sworn word:

> I have founded your dynasty to last forever,
> I have built you a throne to outlast all time.
>
> *Psalms 89:3–4, JB*

David has been anointed with God's "holy oil" – the oil of the Holy Spirit. God's "Hand" and "Arm", His means of 'manipulation' and creation, refer to His creative power, the primary source of strength and support of a true prophet:

> I have selected My servant *('eved)* David
> and anointed him with My holy oil;
> My Hand will be constantly with him,
> he will be able to rely on My Arm.
>
> *Psalms 89:20–21, JB*

Jesus uses the same metaphor. In his parable of the wicked husbandmen (tenant farmers) who are put in charge of their master's vineyard, the vineyard is the world, while the servants who are sent to receive the harvest are the prophets:

> A certain landowner planted a vineyard; and he put a hedge around it, and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went to a far away country. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants *(douloi)* to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants *(douloi),* and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants *(douloi)* more than the first; and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, "They will reverence my son." But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize his inheritance." And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.
>
> *Matthew 21:33–39; cf. KJV*

For the third-century Christian Clement of Alexandria, the Word in human form is the servant of God. The divine Word, he says, is "the Son of God and the saviour *(sōtēr)* of men – His servant *(diakōn),* our teacher.… For that which is of flesh has the form of a servant *(doulos).*"[10] Irenaeus also reiterates the Christian doctrine that Christ was both man and Word, adding that just "as he was the servant of God, so is he the Son of God and Lord of the universe."[11]

In *Isaiah,* Israel is commonly described as the "servant (He. *'eved*)" or the "servant of *Yahweh ('eved Yahweh)*". The people of Israel are chosen, set

apart, and saved, in order to be God's witness before the nations.[12] However, there are also four songs of the "Servant of *Yahweh*",[13] which depict a messianic individual. This "servant" is understood by Jewish readers to refer to any messianic individual or prophet. Christianity, however, interprets it as a prophesy of Jesus, and translations tend to emphasize the parallels. Even so, the description given in *Isaiah* relates to all great masters, not to Jesus alone.

According to these songs, a messiah is chosen by God; he is filled with the divine Spirit, and teaches true spirituality and holiness. He does not proselytize or impose himself upon the weak-hearted. He is a divine trust placed by God among His creatures to open their spiritual eyes, and lead them from the captivity of this world:

> Here is My servant *('eved)* whom I uphold,
> My chosen one in whom My soul delights.
> I have endowed him with My Spirit,
> that he may bring true justice to the nations.
>
> He does not cry out or shout aloud,
> or make his voice heard in the streets.
> He does not break the crushed reed,
> nor quench the wavering flame. . . .
>
> I, *Yahweh,* have called you to serve the cause of right;
> I have taken you by the hand and formed you;
> I have appointed you as covenant of the people
> and light of the nations,
> to open the eyes of the blind,
> to free captives from prison,
> and those who live in darkness from the dungeon.
>
> *Isaiah 42:1–3, 6–7, JB*

The servant of God was called by Him from his mother's womb to be a teacher of mankind. He has the power to reach those in the most distant places:

> Coasts and islands, listen to me,
> pay attention, distant peoples.
> *Yahweh* called me when I was in the womb,
> before my birth He had pronounced my name.
>
> He made my mouth like a sharp sword,
> He hid me in the shadow of His hand.
> He made me into a sharpened arrow
> and concealed me in his quiver.

He said to me, "Israel, you are My servant *('eved)*
through whom I shall manifest My glory." . . .

Yahweh has spoken,
who formed me in the womb to be His servant *('eved)*. . . .
He said, "It is not enough for you to be My servant *('eved),*
to restore the tribes of Jacob,
and bring back the survivors of Israel;
I shall make you a light to the nations,
so that My salvation may reach the remotest parts of earth."

Isaiah 49:1–3, 5–6, NJB

The servant is himself a disciple. His spiritual ears have been opened by *Yahweh,* and he knows how to listen. His Speech is the divine Voice of God that leads souls from darkness to light:

The Lord *Yahweh* has given me a disciple's tongue:
So that I may know how to reply to the wearied,
He provides me with Speech.
Each morning He wakes me to hear,
to listen like a disciple.
The Lord *Yahweh* has opened my ear. . . .

Let anyone who fears *Yahweh* among you,
listen to the Voice of His servant *('eved)!*
Whoever walks in darkness
and has no light shining for Him,
let him trust in the name of *Yahweh,*
let him lean on his God.

Isaiah 50:4, 10, JB

He has the power to take the sins of others onto his own body, through his own suffering and death:

See, My servant *('eved)* will prosper,
he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights. . . .
On him lies a punishment that brings us peace,
and through his wounds, we are healed.
We had all gone astray like sheep,
each taking his own way, and *Yahweh* burdened him
with the sins of all of us.
Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly,
he never opened his mouth,

like a lamb that is lead to the slaughterhouse,
like a sheep that is dumb before its shearers,
never opening its mouth.

By force and by law he was taken –
would anyone plead his cause?
Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living –
for our faults, struck down in death.
They gave him a grave with the wicked,
a tomb with the rich –
Though he had done no wrong
and there had been no perjury in his mouth.

Yahweh has been pleased to crush him with suffering….
His soul's anguish over, he shall see the light and be content.
By his sufferings shall My servant justify many,
taking their faults on himself.

Hence, I will grant whole hordes for his tribute,
he shall divide the spoil with the mighty,
for surrendering himself to death,
and letting himself be taken for a sinner,
while he was bearing the faults for many,
and praying all the time for sinners.

Isaiah 52:13, 53:5–12, JB

Both the biblical *Psalms* and these songs in *Isaiah* are echoed in the *Thanksgiving Hymns* from the Dead Sea Scrolls, written perhaps by the mysterious teacher of righteousness, of whom so little is known. He too is inspired by the Holy Spirit; his spiritual eyes and ears have been opened by God; he has been given a spiritual understanding that has encompassed the divine mysteries, enabling him to teach others:

I thank Thee, O Lord, for Thou didst shed
thy Holy Spirit upon Thy servant *('eved).*…
How shall I look, unless Thou open my eyes?
Or hear, unless Thou unstop my ears?
My heart is astounded,
for to the uncircumcised ear
a Word has been disclosed,
and a heart of stone has understood the right precepts….
For Thou, O my God, didst open a fountain
in the mouth of Thy servant *('eved).*

Thou didst engrave by the measuring cord
Thy mysteries upon his tongue,
that out of his understanding
he might preach to a creature,
and interpret these things to dust like myself.
Thanksgiving Hymns 3:1–10, 24:15–20, 24:5–15, CDSV pp.252, 298–99, 302

He has been led into the ways of true holiness, able to contemplate upon the divine "Wisdom":

Thou hast favoured me, Thy servant *('eved),*
with a Spirit of knowledge,
that I may choose truth and goodness,
and loathe all the ways of iniquity.
And I have loved Thee freely
and with all my heart;
Contemplating the mysteries of Thy Wisdom,
I have sought Thee.
Thanksgiving Hymns 5:25ff., CDSV p.255

He knows that all things have been made by God; that holiness comes from Him; and that human beings are made perfect only by divine favour and by the purification of His "Holy Spirit":

Blessed art Thou, O Lord,
Maker of all things and mighty in deeds,
all things are Thy work!
Behold, Thou art pleased to favour Thy servant *('eved),*
and hast graced me with Thy Spirit of mercy
and with the radiance of Thy glory.
Thine, Thine is righteousness,
for it is Thou who hast done all these things!…

And I know that man is not righteous
except through Thee;
And therefore I implore Thee,
by the Spirit which Thou hast given me,
to perfect Thy favours to Thy servant *('eved)* forever,
purifying me by Thy Holy Spirit,
and drawing me near to Thee by Thy grace,
according to the abundance of Thy mercies.
Thanksgiving Hymns 5:1–15, CDSV pp.257–58

He prays for the purity of true holiness, for he knows that he can do nothing of himself – it is the Lord who has done everything:

> Rejoice the soul of Thy servant *(ʿeved)* with Thy truth,
> and cleanse me by Thy righteousness.
> Even as I have hoped in Thy goodness,
> and waited for Thy grace,
> so hast Thou freed me from my calamities,
> in accordance with Thy forgiveness;
> And in my distress Thou hast comforted me,
> for I have leaned on Thy mercy.
>
> Blessed art Thou, O Lord,
> for it is Thou who hast done these things!
> Thou hast set hymns of praise
> within the mouth of Thy servant *(ʿeved),*
> and hast established for me a response of the tongue.
>
> *Thanksgiving Hymns 22:30–35, CDSV pp.295–96*

See also: **chosen one**, **elect**, **mashi´aḥ**, **righteous one**, **servant** (▸4).

1. *E.g. Exodus* 4:10, 14:31; *Deuteronomy* 34:5; *Baruch* 2:28; *3 Enoch* 48; *Book of Revelation* 15:3.
2. *E.g. Ezekiel* 34:23–24, 37:24–25; *Isaiah* 37:35; *1 Maccabees* 4:30; *Luke* 1:69; *Acts* 4:25.
3. *Genesis* 26:24.
4. *E.g. Deuteronomy* 9:27.
5. *E.g. Deuteronomy* 9:27; *Ezekiel* 28:25; *Isaiah* 41:8.
6. *E.g. Ezekiel* 38:17; *Baruch* 2:20, 24; *Daniel* 9:6, 10.
7. *E.g. 3 Enoch* 16, 40.
8. *3 Enoch* 1, 10, 44, 48.
9. *Cf. Psalms* 18:1, 36:1, 78:70, 89:20, 132:10, 144:10.
10. Clement of Alexandria, *Instructor* 3:1; *cf. WCA1* p.274.
11. Irenaeus, *Fragments* 52, *AH2* p.182.
12. *E.g. Isaiah* 41:8*ff.*
13. *Isaiah* 42:1–9, 49:1–6, 50:4–11, 52:13–53:12.

seven shepherds (He. *shivʿah roʿim*) In the biblical scroll of *Micah,* the prophet tells the Israelites that seven shepherds and eight other leaders will come to protect them when they are attacked by the neighbouring Assyrians.[1] The rabbis of the *Talmud* understood the seven shepherds to be the biblical patriarchs and a few of the early prophets. In some texts, they are listed as

Adam, Seth, Methuselah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and David[2]; in others as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David.[3]

Rabbi Israel Eliʿezer, commonly known as the Baʿal Shem Tov, the first Hasidic master of the eighteenth century, also wrote of the seven shepherds in a letter to his brother-in-law concerning an inner spiritual journey:

> I went higher step by step until I entered the palace of the messiah, where the messiah studies the *Torah* together with all the sages and saints, as well as with the seven shepherds *(shivʿah roʿim).*
>
> *Baʿal Shem Tov, Letter to Rabbi Gershon, in SBJT p.185*

The seven shepherds were also called the seven honoured guests, the *ushpizin* (Ar. guests), who are expectantly awaited on the Jewish festival of *Sukkot* (Tabernacles) to come and grace the *sukkah* (tabernacle). It is believed that the seven shepherds leave the Garden of Eden (metaphorically, the spiritual realms) to enjoy the divine light of the *Shekhinah* (the indwelling divine presence) that is believed to manifest in the *sukkah.* The *Zohar* explains that the *sukkah* is not an ordinary dwelling; rather it is the abode of the *Shekhinah,* "which is a *sukkah* that covers and protects us".[4] Through the *Shekhinah,* all who dwell in the *sukkah* are linked with the seven *ushpizin* and through them receive a spiritual influence from on high. On each day of the weeklong festival, a different guest leads the other six. Each guest corresponds to a day of the week, and to one of the seven millennia of human history, according to Jewish mythological chronology.

Jewish mystical texts explain that each of the seven *ushpizin* corresponds to a fundamental spiritual pathway *(sefirah)* through which (metaphysically speaking) the world is nourished and perfected:[5]

Abraham:	*Ḥesed* – love, benevolence, and kindness (known for his hospitality).
Isaac:	*Gevurah/Din* – restraint, strength, and personal discipline.
Jacob:	*Tiferet* – beauty, truth, and harmony.
Moses:	*Neẓaḥ* – victory, eternity, and *Torah.*
Aaron:	*Hod* – splendour and humility; receptivity to the Divine.
Joseph:	*Yesod* – spiritual foundation, holiness, and connection.
David:	*Malkut* – sovereignty and leadership; establishment of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

In his *Derekh ha-Shem* ('Path of the Name'), Rabbi Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto, eighteenth-century kabbalist and teacher of ethics and morality, underscored the belief that there is a close relationship between human action and the divine *sefirot* (emanations). When a human being manifests an attribute

associated with one of the *sefirah,* that particular *sefirah* is activated and shines its light into the creation, thereby increasing the quantity of spiritual grace and light in the world.[6]

It is understandable therefore that Jewish mystical texts emphasize the importance of human action and its influence on the Divine. By inviting the *ushpizin* into one's *sukkah,* one is inviting all the fathers of Judaism, who, as shepherds, have guided their people throughout the generations. The *ushpizin* are thereby an inspiration, bringing the power of the Divine into everyday life.

The *Zohar* also explains that the portion of food set aside for the *ushpizin* in the *sukkah* should be given to the poor.[7] Jewish ethical teachings stress the importance of feeding the needy and sharing one's material wealth with the poor, especially on the Sabbath and at festivals. *Sukkot* is the pre-eminent festival at which this is practised, when as many guests as possible are invited. This inspires every person, every family, to feed the poor, and is believed to bring the grace and light of the *ushpizin* upon the host. As contemporary rabbi and mystical teacher Adin Steinsaltz writes:

> The seven shepherds – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David – are seven eminent figures in our history. Of course, they are also much more than that. They are personalities who continue to lead the Children of Israel, even in our times, in an invisible fashion. We invite them to our *sukkah* because we really feel that they are present among us and are not figments of the past.
>
> Men fall into two categories. The first is composed of men who act at one point in history. They belong to the past and their actions have come to a close. The seven shepherds, however, belong to the second category of men: those who have a permanent impact on the Jewish soul, an impact that has lasted up to this very day. These shepherds are more than archetypal figures. A more fitting description is that we, as their descendents, have undergone their influence and have integrated part of their personalities.
>
> The seven shepherds are not figures or role models, but rather seven facets, or seven fundamental features of our identity. These shepherds do not roam the fields; they roam our souls. They are our spiritual fathers, and we 'carry' their genes. They are the building blocks of our heritage and our spiritual genetic background.
>
> *Adin Steinsaltz and Josy Eisenberg, Seven Lights, SLJ pp.271–72*

1. *Micah* 5:5.
2. *Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sukkah* 52b.
3. *Zohar* 3:103b, *WZ3* pp.1305–8.
4. *Zohar* 2:135a, *WZ3* p.1249.

5. Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto, *Derekh ha-Shem* 3:2:5; *Zohar Ḥadash, Toldot* 26c; *cf. Zohar* 2:256a.
6. Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto, *Derekh ha-Shem* 4:2:2, 5.
7. *Zohar* 3:104a.

shāh, **shah** (P) *Lit.* king; also, a title of respectful address or reference for a Sufi master, as in Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Shāh Niyāz Barelvī, Shāh Qāsim Anwar, Nūr ʿAlī Shāh, ʿInāyat Shāh, Bulleh Shāh, and so on; metaphorically, a master, a *pīr,* a *shaykh,* a *murshid;* also as *shāhanshāh* or *shahanshāh* (king of kings, supreme king, emperor) and *pādshāh* or *pādshah* (king, sovereign, emperor).

Rūmī often speaks of the master as the *shāh.* Telling the story of how Bilqīs, Queen of Sabā (Sheba), sends lavish and impressive material gifts to King Solomon, Rūmī writes:

> O Bilqīs! Come, behold for once
> the kingdom of the *shāhs* and *sulṭāns* of religion.
> Inwardly, he (the *shāh*) sits in the rose garden,
> outwardly he acts as a guide *(hādī)* among his friends.
> The garden goes with him wherever he goes,
> but it is always concealed from people.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:1101–3; cf. MJR4 p.333*

A common image in Rūmī's *Maśnavī* is the soul as the king's falcon. The king is either God or the perfect saint. So long as the falcon stays on the king's hand, it is contented and cared for. But when it strays from the king's hand, then it suffers. The falcon, in one of Rūmī's stories, flies away from the king and goes to the house of an "old crone" who is busy making broth for her children. Thinking the bird to be neglected and unkempt, she trims its talons, clips its long wings, and feeds it on straw. Rūmī continues:

> Know, O friend, that such is the affection of the fool:
> the fool ever walks crookedly on the way.
> The king's *(shāh)* day became late, seeking the falcon:
> at length he came to the old woman and her tent.
> Suddenly he saw the falcon amidst the smoke and dust:
> the king wept sorely over it and made lament.
> He said, "Although this is retribution for your deed
> in not keeping firm faith with me,
> yet how could you make hell your dwelling after paradise?…
> This is the fitting reward for one who unthinkingly flees
> from the king *(shāh)* who knows him well,
> to the house of an old hag."

Meanwhile, the falcon was rubbing its wings
against the king's *(shāh)* hand:
Without tongue it was saying, "I have sinned."
Rūmī, Maśnavī II:328–34; cf. MJR2 pp.238–39

Worldly kings of the past were the arbiters of life and death. Devotees of a master yearn to merge their own selves into the divine self of their master, for his inward being is one with God. This constitutes both the death of the ego and dying while living – withdrawal of the soul from the body:

Die, die in the presence of a beautiful king *(shāh)!*
Having once died like that, you are both king *(shāh)* and renowned.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 636:6633, KSD2 p.58; cf. in SSE5 p.62

Rūmī and other Sufis have drawn considerable imagery from the game of chess, in which the aim is to checkmate the opponent's king *(shāh).* In Persian, the word for the castle is *rukh* (hence its alternative English name, the rook), which also means 'cheek'. The term for 'checkmate' is *shāh-māt,* meaning 'the king is dead'. Metaphorically, the death or 'checkmate' of the self is when the lover's ego is 'slain' by the radiant cheek of (intense love for) the beloved. Rūmī uses this kind of chess imagery in a variety of ways:

When the *shāh* showed his cheek *(rukh),* the horse (*asb, i.e.* the knight)
went down with the elephant (*pīl, i.e.* the bishop).
Then the poor intellect *('aql)* was checkmated *(shāh-māt),*
and the soul *(jān)* lay stunned *(māt)* between the two.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 386:4113, KSD1 p.227; cf. in TSR p.171

When you have seen the cheek *(rukh)* of the *shāh,*
go out of your house like the pawn (footman) –
When you have seen the sun,
then disappear like stars!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2372:25079, KSD5 p.152, in TSR p.171

On the leather (chessboard), I am afoot,
I do not need a horse (*i.e.* knight):
I am killed by you, O *shāh,*
put your cheek *(rukh)* on my cheek *(rukh)!*
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2330:24664, KSD5 p.129; cf. in TSR p.171

We have seen no chess, and yet are checkmated *(māt):*
we have drunk not a single sip, and yet are drunk.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1569:16475, KSD3 p.275; cf. in TSR p.171

Ḥāfiẓ is also a frequent user of the metaphor. Traditionally believed to have been a court poet, Ḥāfiẓ frequently mentions the king *(shāh, pādshāh, shāhanshāh),* sometimes identifying his patrons by name, together with the praise expected of a court poet. In many of these instances, however, there seems to be an intentional double meaning. Even when Ḥāfiẓ names a particular king, he is also addressing his divine beloved. And in some instances, there is no doubt that Ḥāfiẓ is speaking only of his master. The divine *shāh* purifies the soul and forgives past sins:

O Ḥāfiẓ! Since you are impure,
ask a favour of the king *(shāh).*
For it is for such purification
that that essence of generosity has come.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.77, DIH p.159; cf. DHWC (166:8) p.321

Let us drink wine! Pass the gold cup to Ḥāfiẓ!
For out of his mercy, the emperor *(pādshah)* has forgiven
the sins of the *ṣūfīs.*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.82, DIH p.168; cf. DHWC (207:11) p.385

The true devotee surrenders his self completely to the master:

No one in the world has a slave like Ḥāfiẓ:
for no one in the world has a king *(shāh)* like you!
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.61, DIH p.135; cf. DHWC (170:11) p.327

If the king *(shāh)* accepts me as his slave,
I, the slave, will gladly give myself in bondage to his service.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (337:6) p.320, DIH p.267; cf. DHWC (342:6) p.587

O king of kings *(shāhanshāh)!* O lofty star!
For God's sake, bestow this blessing on me:
that, like the sky, I may kiss the dust of your court.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (2:12) p.35, DIH p.30; cf. DHWC (2:12) p.18

Full of longing, the devotee yearns for the life-giving glance of the master:

O king *(shāh)* of beauty, cast a glance
on the state of this beggar.
For my ear has heard many tales
of the king *(shāh)* and the beggar.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (142:3) p.155, DIH p.129; cf. DHWC (215:3) p.396

Addressing God as the "*Sāqī* (Cupbearer)", he requests that his master should bring him a "cup" of the "wine" of divine love when he sits in his nightly meditation:

> O *sāqī,* when the king *(shāh)* drinks
> the morning cup of wine,
> ask him to take some in a cup of gold
> to Ḥāfiẓ, who keeps awake by night.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.150, DIH p.259; cf. DHWC (329:8) p.570*

In all his experience of life, he has never met anyone like his master:

> O emperor *(pādshāh),* truly, it is a fact that
> no eye has seen, and no ear has heard anyone like you.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.147, DIH p.256; cf. DHWC (326:8) p.564*

See also: **falcon** (▸1), **sulṭān**.

shāhid (A/P) (pl. *shawāhid*) *Lit.* witness, sign, mark; evidence, proof, testimony; attestor, testifier; also, as *al-Shahīd,* God, the Witness who sees all things;[1] an attributive epithet of Muḥammad, and by extension other saints and prophets, who are witnesses of God, bearing witness both of God and of the deeds of human beings, as in the *Qur'ān:* "O Prophet, we have sent you as a witness *(shāhid),* a bearer of glad tidings, and warner;"[2] also, especially in Persian literature, an object of beauty, the beautiful beloved, the fair beloved, some thing or person worthy of love; hence, the inner spiritual image or form of the beloved, since he is the witness of divine Beauty; from the same root as *shahādah* (declaration of faith), *mushāhadah* and *shuhūd* (witnessing, contemplation), *mushāhid* (witnesser), *mashhūd* (the one witnessed), *shahīd* (martyr), and so on; a common term in Sufi literature with a wide spread of meaning; commonly found in poetry as part of an alliterative triplet: *shamʿ* (candle, divine light), *sharāb* (wine, divine love), and *shāhid* (the beautiful beloved).

The primary meaning of *shāhid* is 'witness', a person or thing who is present. In the *Qur'ān,* it is used in a variety of such contexts. In cases of debt, men are instructed to draw up written contracts in the presence of witnesses.[3] *Allāh* is also said to witness everything: "*Allāh* is the witness *(shāhid)* to all things,"[4] and, "Why do you reject the signs of *Allāh,* when *Allāh* Himself is witness *(shāhid)* to all you do?"[5] Similarly, "What thing is most weighty in evidence? Say: '*Allāh* is witness *(shāhid)* between me and you.'"[6]

The *Qur'ān* also speaks of bearing witness *(shāhid)* to the Muslim faith in one God, and to faith in his Messenger:

> Can you possibly bear witness *(yash-hadu)* that, beside *Allāh,* there is another god? Say: 'Nay! I cannot bear such witness *(yash-hadu)!*' Say: 'But in truth He is the one God, and I am innocent of joining others with Him.'
>
> *Qur'ān 6:19; cf. AYA, MGK*

> When they listen to the revelation received by the Messenger, you will see their eyes overflow with tears, for they recognize the truth. They pray: "Our Lord! We believe; count us among your witnesses *(shāhidīn).*
>
> *Qur'ān 5:83; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

Muḥammad – and by extension, all saints and prophets – is also described as a witness: "O Prophet! We have sent you as a witness *(shāhid),*"[7] that is, as one who bears witness of God, and is also a witness to the hearts and deeds of human beings, especially on the Day of Judgment. Abraham, too, also describes himself to his detractors as a witness:

> They said, "Have you brought us the truth, or are you some jester?"
> He said, "Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth,
> he who created them; and I am a witness *(shāhid)* to that."
>
> *Qur'ān 21:55–56; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

At the time of the primal covenant, when the souls in pre-eternity acknowledged their servanthood to God's lordship, they agreed: "Yea! We testify to it *(balá shahidnā).*"[8]

In a Sufi context, *shāhid* has several meanings:

1. God Himself, as the witness of all He has created; God's presence in all He has created;[9] the absolute Reality:

> This term *(shāhid)* denotes a clear and truthful vision of primal essential Reality *(Maʿnī),* seen 'just as it is', with no doubt or possibility of delusion or alteration.
>
> *Bākharzī, Awrād al-Aḥbāb wa Fuṣūṣ al-Ādāb, AAF2 p.251; cf. in SSE1 p.194 (n.2)*

2. The inner spiritual form of the beloved, also known as the face or image of the beloved, who is the witnesser and manifestation of divine Beauty; hence, the radiant and spiritual form of the perfect saint; "he who is fair of form and beauty".[10] This usage is prevalent in Persian literature.

3. The true saint or perfect man, whether at the human or the spiritual level.

4. The devotee or wayfarer who witnesses the vision of the image or face of the divine beloved, or who witnesses the Reality that is witness to everything.[11]

5. The characteristic state of the wayfarer's heart, which bears witness to his inner condition. This may be an individual characteristic, such as ecstasy *(wajd)* or knowledge *(ʿilm),* but it also includes the overall mystic experience of the wayfarer. Whatever he has in his heart is his witness:

> The word *shāhid* means 'that which is present', and in Sufi terminology it signifies that which is present in a person's heart, the remembrance of which dominates the heart. If knowledge *(ʿilm)* is prevalent, then knowledge is the heart's witness *(shāhid);* if ecstasy is prevalent, then ecstasy is the heart's witness *(shāhid);* if it is God, then God is the heart's witness *(shāhid).*
>
> *Jurjānī, Taʿrīfāt, KTJ p.116*

These meanings are all linked together through the meanings of various allied terms. The witness *(shāhid),* through witnessing or contemplative vision *(shuhūd, mushāhadah),* witnesses or has inner experience of the divine Witness (either God Himself or the face of the beloved), who is also the one witnessed *(mashhūd).* During the mystical experience of *shuhūd* or *mushāhadah,* the witness *(shāhid)* and the One who is witnessed *(Mashhūd)* become one. Some of the Sufis, especially those who have enjoyed using a plethora of terms, have produced complex and often confusing 'explanations', in order to link the meaning of all these terms.[12]

Taking Muḥammad as his example of a fully enlightened mystic, Rūmī describes him as the "witness" who sees everything through his meditation and inner transcendence (his "nightly vigil"). Muḥammad sees aright because he has no "self-interest". Everyone, says Rūmī, can become such a "witness" by giving up "self-interest":

> Know the eye of the mystic
> to be the salvation of the two worlds,
> whereby every sovereign receives help.
> Muḥammad was the intercessor for every kind of person,
> because his eye "did not swerve"[13] from anything but God.
> In the night of this world, where the divine Sun is veiled,
> he beheld God, and his hope was in Him.
> His eyes received collyrium,…
> He saw what Gabriel could not endure.…
>
> The spiritual level of all God's servants was visible to him:
> therefore, God named him the witness *(shāhid).*

The weapons of the witness *(shāhid)*
are an incisive tongue and a keen eye,
whose nightly vigil no secret can elude.

If a thousand pretenders *(mudda'ī)* show their heads,
the judge listens to the witness *(shāhid).*
This is the way that judges make decisions:
to them, a truthful witness *(shāhid)* is like two clear eyes.
The testimony of the witness *(shāhid)* is equivalent to the eye,
because he has seen with disinterest that which is otherwise unseen.
The pretender also has an eye, but self-interest has overwhelmed it:
self-interest is a veil upon the eye of the heart.

God wants you to become spiritual *(zāhid),*
so that you will abandon self-interest
and become a witness *(shāhid).*
For these self-interested motives are veils upon the eye:
they cloak vision, like blindfolds.

Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:2860–63, 2866–73; cf. MJR6 p.416

Externals are "witnesses" to what lies within. But the perfect mystic, says Rūmī, requires no other person to witness his attainment, nor does he need to prove himself to anyone:

Word and deed are witnesses *(guvāhān)* to the hidden mind:
from these two, you can infer the inward state.
When your thought does not penetrate within,
inspect the patient's urine from without.
Word and deed are like the urine of the sick,
which is clear evidence for the bodily physician.
But the spiritual physician enters into his patient's soul
and penetrates in a spiritual way into his inmost thoughts.
He has no need of fine words and deeds, so,
"Beware of them, for they are spies on human hearts."[14]
Demand this testimony *(guvāh)* of words and deeds
only from him who is not united with the Sea, like a river. . . .

The inner light of the traveller
who has passed beyond the pale (of selfhood) –
The deserts and plains are filled with his radiance.
His being a witness *(shāhid)* is independent of witnesses *(shuhūd),*
and of voluntary acts of religious piety,
and of self-devotion and self-sacrifice.

Since the light of that Reality has shone forth,
he has become independent of these hypocrisies.
Therefore, do not demand of him
the testimony *(guvāh)* of word and deed,
for through him the two worlds have blossomed like a rose.
Rūmī, Maśnavī V:236–45; cf. MJR6 p.17

Using *shāhid* in the sense of the beautiful or fair beloved, Rūmī extols the virtues of his own master Shams-i Tabrīz. He is referring to both the inner and outer forms of the beloved:

O fair beloved *(shāhid)* without blemish,
because of you, the soul dances!
You have intoxicated my head –
from me to you, God's peace!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2310:24522, KSD5 p.120; cf. in SPL p.291

See also: **shahīd** (▸3), **shāhid** (7.2).

1. *Qur'ān* 5:117.
2. *Qur'ān* 33:45; *cf. AYA.*
3. *Qur'ān* 2:282.
4. *Qur'ān* 22:17, 33:55, 85:9; *cf. AYA, KPA, MGK.*
5. *Qur'ān* 3:98; *cf. AYA, MGK.*
6. *Qur'ān* 6:19; *cf. AYA, MGK.*
7. *Qur'ān* 33:45; *cf. AYA, KPA, MGK.*
8. *Qur'ān* 7:172; *cf. AYA, MGK.*
9. Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT2* p.471.
10. Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT2* p.471.
11. Al-Qāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah* 343, *GSTA* p.106.
12. *E.g.* Maḥmūd Qāshānī, *Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāyah wa-Miftāḥ al-Kifāyah, MHK* p.141; Rūzbihān, *Mashrab al-Arwāḥ* 4:26, *MARB* p.79; Rūzbihān, *Sharḥ-i Shaṭḥiyāt* 408:1095, *CPS* p.563, in *SSE2* pp.35–39.
13. *Qur'ān* 53:17.
14. A saying variously ascribed to Aḥmad ibn ʿĀṣim al-Anṭākī, *MJR7* p.293, *MJR8* p.230, and to Abū Yaʿqūb al-Sūsī, *MJR8* p.171, by Ismāʿīl Anqirawī in *Fātiḥ al-Ubyāt,* his Turkish commentary on the *Maśnavī.*

Shaiva (S/H) *Lit.* of *Shiva;* relating to or belonging to the god *Shiva;* a Shaivite, a follower of Shaivism; one who worships *Shiva* as the supreme Being; also, one of the most widespread schools of Hinduism. See **Shaiva** (▸3).

shākta (S/H) *Lit.* of *shakti* (power); a follower of Shaktism; also Shaktism, one of the principal schools of Hinduism, which focuses upon worship of *Shakti* or *Devī,* the divine Mother, as the supreme absolute Divinity. See **shākta** (▸3).

shalākā-purusha (S) *Lit.* illustrious, worthy, or distinguished *(shalākā)* human beings *(purusha);* a Jain term for a class of heroes, great personalities or noble men who, according to Jain mythology and cosmogony, are born during each ascending *(utsarpiṇī)* and descending *(avasarpiṇī)* half cycle of time in this part of the universe (known as *Bharata-Kshetra*).

Their lives are recounted in a collection of Jain texts known to Western scholars as the 'universal history' texts – works that relate the legendary and mythological history of the world, as understood by Jainism. Some of the themes are common to Hindu and Buddhist sources, some are original. Since the ninth century CE, a list of sixty-three *shalākā-purushas* has become the standard, consisting of the twenty-four *Tīrthankaras,* twelve *chakravartins,* nine *baladevas,* nine *vāsudevas,* and nine *prativāsudevas.*

The universal history texts, which recount the lives of these sixty-three, include the *Mahāpurāṇa* by the *Digambara* teachers Jinasena (*c.*770–850) and Guṇabhadra (C9th) and the *Trishashṭi-Shalākā-Purusha-Charitra* ('The Acts of the Sixty-Three Illustrious Men') by the *Shvetāmbara* teacher Āchārya Hemachandra (*c.*1087–1172). Various other stories are related about them in Jain texts, such as the Jain *Purāṇas* and the Jain versions of the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa.*

The twenty-four *Tīrthankaras* are the perfected and liberated souls who have attained omniscience *(kevala-jñāna),* and who, in their own time, led others on the path to liberation, and whom Jains look upon as the spiritual fathers and exemplars of their religion.

The twelve *chakravartins* (wheel-turners) are universal monarchs or emperors.

The nine *baladevas* (powerful gods), also called *balabhadras* (powerful and blessed), are the elder half-brothers of the *vāsudevas,* sharing the same father but having different mothers. They possess half the power of *chakravartins,* and they uphold the path of righteousness and follow Jain principles, especially that of causing no harm *(ahiṃsā)* to their fellow human beings or other creatures. After renunciation of the world, they become Jain monks, and generally attain liberation and omniscience. In the last cycle, all attain liberation except the ninth, who is reborn as a god in the heaven of *Brahmā (Brahmāloka).* According to Jain mythology, the eighth *baladeva* is Rāma, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa.* In the Jain version of the epic, it is not Rāma but Lakshmaṇa who kills the evil *rākshasa* (demon) Rāvaṇa. Consequently, Rāma causes no harm to other beings, and is therefore free to attain liberation and omniscience.

The nine *vāsudevas,* also called *nārāyaṇas,* are the younger half-brothers of the *baladevas.* They too possess half the power of a *chakravartin,* but because they engage in warfare and kill their enemies (the *prativāsudevas*), they are reborn as hellish beings *(nārakis)* in hell *(naraka).* In the last cycle, the eighth *vāsudeva* is Lakshmaṇa, half-brother of Rāma, who kills Rāvaṇa, for which reason he is reborn in hell. The ninth *vāsudeva* is Kṛishṇa, who is presently in the third hell and will be reborn as a *Tīrthankara* in the next cycle of time. *Vāsudeva* means beneficent *(vasu)* deity *(deva).* As *shalākā-purusha,* the *vāsudevas* and *prativāsudevas* are unique to Jain mythology.

The nine *prativāsudevas,* also called *pratinārāyaṇas,* are personifications of the forces of evil. *Prati* is a suffix meaning 'in opposition to', and each of them has a particular enmity towards one of the *vāsudevas,* by whom they are eventually killed. After death, they go to one of the hellish realms.

See also: **chakravartin**, **Tīrthankara**.

shaman Medicine man, priest, spiritual practitioner, healer, holy man, spiritual person, the chosen one; an intermediary who communicates with the spirit world to heal the sick, foretell the future, and adjust events in the physical world for the greater good; one who is in touch with the spirit world and the subtle or unseen aspects of the material world.

The origins of the word are uncertain. According to one theory, shaman comes from the eastern-Siberian Evenki (Tungusic) word *šamán.* Russian immigrants to the area began using the term as a result of interaction with the indigenous people. The term appears in the memoirs of Russian exile and country priest Avvakum (1620–1682), and was brought to Western Europe in 1692 by the Dutch traveller Nicolas Witsen, who wrote of his time among the indigenous Siberian people in his *Noord en Oost Tataryen.* In 1698, Lübeck businessman Adam Brand published an account of a Russian delegation to China, an English translation of which, published the same year, introduced the term to the English-speaking world.

The etymology of *šamán* itself is again subject to scholarly speculation. Some suggest that it comes from the Tungus root *ša* (to know); others maintain that it is a Manchu word, the Manchu being a Mongolian race of Manchuria who, like the Evenki, speak a language of the Tungusic family. Others point out that the word is very similar to the Sanskrit *shramaṇa,* a term used for any of a variety of itinerant holy men, and much used in Buddhist texts – Buddhism having been widely spread in Central Asia. Opponents of the latter suggestion consider the notion too far-fetched to be a realistic etymology.[1]

Whatever the origins of the word may be, shamanism is a phenomenon that is common to probably all native traditions of the world. A shaman is one who is an adept at contacting some aspect of the invisible all-pervading

spirit – he or she is a conduit to or from the Great Spirit. This contact is made through one of a number of age-old, traditional, indigenous rituals. The purpose is the benefit of an individual, a community, even of mankind as a whole. Sometimes, the intention is to maintain well-being, to purify and cleanse; sometimes for protection, nurturing positivity, eliminating negativity; sometimes for curing; and always, above all else, for humbly giving thanks and expressing gratitude – the one defining prayer of all traditional native American communities. The term is used by Western scholars, anthropologists, and new-age practitioners of native American spirituality. Using terms from their own languages, traditional indigenous people refer to a shaman as a medicine man or a holy man (or woman).

So-called shamanistic practices are little understood by Euro-American Judaeo-Christian peoples, or for that matter by anybody raised in an urban secular culture, engrossed in modernity and removed from an earthly existence grounded in nature.

Shamanistic traditions sprang from a profoundly grounded existence, literally grounded in an earth-based existence; an existence in an egalitarian world, devoid for the most part of hierarchies, except familial ones, and yet a world acknowledged as infinitely rich in multidimensional relations – a vast spatial network, an intricate, infinite web of interdependency with a Creator.

Shamanistic practices predate the known theoretical philosophies and religions. They are very old behaviours, one of the oldest ways of being human; if a person can read the signs, learn how to commune with their world, with nature, then they learn how to commune with God.

The world navigated by the shaman is a dynamic world wherein the earth or ground itself is living matter. The tender beanshoot and the sprouting germ of corn nestled in the soil receive, through their delicate rootlets, life substance from the earth. The earth feeds itself to them; what is given to them is living matter; life is produced and conserved in them. Then, as food, the ripened corn and beans create, develop, and sustain the life of human beings. The Creator creates daily from the earth: the earth, through the life power innate in its very substance, becomes food for man and is transmuted into the life of man and into that of all living things. From an awareness of this process, the shaman discovers within himself gratitude, reverence, and love for this nurturing, life-giving relationship with Mother Earth.

An alert observer can see that the dynamic life power itself allows things to be derived from other things in an endless cycle. A shaman knows that, through transformations and evolution of this same power, the entire universe is alive and interconnected. This otherwise invisible power is seen as a gift from the Creator to all human beings. A shaman has the ability to enter into an altered state of consciousness at will in order to tap into this invisible, mystery power in order to help people. Indigenous people rely on their relationship with nature to sustain themselves and their communities.

The lifestyle and practices of a shaman are not restricted to inaccessible, esoteric trance states. Anyone who has ever taken a walk in the woods, in a meadow, by the river, to a great waterfall, to a seaside cliff or mountain top, or to anywhere in nature – and become awestruck, drawn in, soothed, entranced, enthralled and healed by the embrace of the great wonderment of the natural world, the Great Mystery, has accessed, on his own, his inner-core shaman. Sometimes, all it takes is an unobstructed view of the big, blue, empty, spacious sky.

A shaman has developed his or her inherent human ability to tap into subtle realms through leading a life of complete dedication to hard work, hardship, suffering, sacrifice, and endless learning. Reaching this altered state of consciousness requires great mental exertion, concentration, and strict self-discipline. Mental and physical preparation may include long periods of isolation, silent meditation, and fasting.

A shaman characteristically understands the human condition – their own human condition on earth as a part of nature – as their holy book and temple. Life on earth is their place of higher education. They learn, through apprenticeship to more advanced shamans, how to access higher realms and commune there. Shamans become adept at reading the visible signs in the material world and at interpreting the higher, unknown, invisible meaning inherent in all things. They serve as intermediaries between human beings and spirit beings.

Although shamans and medicine men tend to be understood as one phenomenon, they actually fall across a broad spectrum of experience. Not all shamans and medicine men possess the same knowledge. Anthropologist Hank Wesselman suggests that, while a shaman will normally be a healer, a healer does not necessarily have the same spiritual elevation as a shaman:

> Every shaman is a medicine person, but not all medicine people are shamans. In my experience, most medicine people are not shamans but tend to be ceremonialists and ritual leaders, invoking the spirits in much the same way as do the priests in our structured organized religions. Some also possess great knowledge of the healing arts and conduct healing ceremonies that can be very powerful as well as effective. But the work of the medicine man or woman usually takes place here in this world of things seen, whereas shamans do their main work in the spiritual realms of things hidden.
>
> *Hank Wesselman, Bowl of Light, BLAW pp.29–30*

See also: **kahuna**, **paí**, **shaman** (**Native North American**), **shaman** (**Native South American**), **tohunga**, **wū**.

1. See "Shamanism," *Wikipedia,* ret. November 2014.

shaman (Native North American) Holy man, priest, spiritual practitioner, healer, medicine man (Lakota, *wichasha wakan*), spiritual person (Lakota, *kahnigapi*), the chosen one, (Hopi, *momwit;* Aztec, *nahualli;* Wampanoag, *powwah*); a native American who communicates with the spirit world to heal, foretell the future, and to make things right in the world.

Native American shamans cultivate a close relationship with the spirit world. Shamans connect with the spirit world almost as easily as other humans interact with the physical. There are variations, however, between the many native cultures of North America. Reliable information concerning these cultures is sparse, and much of what follows has been gleaned from the Oglala Lakota Oyate or the Lakota Sioux. These two Lakota tribes use two *wakan* (power) objects to communicate with the spirit world. One is the stone lodge or stone-people lodge *(inipi)* or what is commonly called a sweat lodge, and the other is the sacred, ceremonial smoking pipe *(chanunpa),* also called, erroneously, a peace pipe.

The *inipi* is usually a dome-shaped structure made of saplings lashed together and covered with animal skins. Blankets are then placed over the outside of the lodge to make it completely dark within. Hot rocks are brought in and water is splashed onto them to draw out Mother Earth. The resulting steam speaks to the shaman and also purifies those who sit in the ceremony. The Lakota believe that steam rising from the rocks is the manifestation of the energy inherent in the rocks. According to Lakota shaman Fools Crow, the hot stones speak to him and bring messages from the higher powers. On some occasions while in the *inipi,* he travels to where the powers reside:

> I shake my rattle and sing my song. Then I lay my rattle down and pull my arms, bent at the elbows, tightly to my sides. With my eyes closed and my hands cupped, I concentrate as powerfully as I can upon the idea of my being lifted up. I begin to shiver and I stomp my feet. Before long I feel myself preparing to soar up like an eagle into space. Maybe it is more like the first firing of a rocket as it begins to leave its launching pad. Pretty soon I feel my body coming apart, and I both feel and see my spirit leaving it. My spirit looks like me, just like I look when I am in the body, and I am the same age. Up and up I go to where the Person is that I am going to visit. It only takes me seconds to get there, although I see myself speeding past birds, then clouds, then planets and stars. I even pass through what the white man calls the Milky Way. . . .
>
> You must understand that while the lodge *(inipi)* is very little, only four feet high and eight feet across, when I am in it, it becomes as big as the universe itself. I do not feel confined; in fact, I am not conscious of any walls at all. It is as if I am floating in space. This is a wonderful feeling, and I wish everyone in the world could share it.

> Then there wouldn't be any people who don't believe in *Wakan-Tanka* (Great Spirit)!…
>
> I go faster than rockets do. I have heard about the speed of light, and what I do is more like that.… I faint when I spirit travel, and I remain unconscious until my spirit returns to my body. Sometimes I am gone for as much as two days. Fannie and Kate (his wives) have had to stay with me and watch over me during this time, and they have told me that sometimes they are afraid I have died.… All I see is lights.
>
> *Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power, FCWM pp.95–96*

The *chanunpa* is a ceremonial smoking pipe that the shaman uses in the lodge. When he feels that the time is right, the shaman, using the *chanunpa,* calls his spirit guide to enter the lodge. The spirit is offered the pipe and is then asked to give help and advice concerning the problems at hand. The *inipi* is a place where shamans can connect with the Great Spirit. Shamans are hence intermediaries between the spirit world and the physical world, and the *inipi* becomes a place between the two worlds. The *chanunpa* symbolizes a request for help. Anyone in the tribe can request help from the shaman by placing their *chanunpa* into the hands of the shaman. This symbolizes their request for aid. The shaman cannot refuse this request because in doing so he would be ignoring his duties to the tribal members.

The primary relationship sought by the shaman is communion with the Great Spirit. Wallace Black Elk of the Lakota tribe explains the nature of this relationship:

> Our real Father is *Tunkashila* (Creator), and our real Mother is the Earth. They give birth and life to all living, so we know we are all interrelated. That is why you hear us always saying *"mitakuye oyasin."* We say those words as we enter the sacred stone-people lodge and also at the end of every prayer. It means 'all my relations'. It helps to remind us that we are related to everything that exists.
>
> *Wallace Black Elk, Sacred Ways of a Lakota, BESW p.4*

Fools Crow says that the deeper one goes and the more time the practitioner spends in ritual and concentration, the more valuable will be the answers offered by *Wakan-Tanka:*

> The old holy man and other medicine people had taught me that the more time you spend and the deeper you go, the greater the success of your quest. The entire idea has to do with achieving a state of complete communion with *Wakan-Tanka* and the helpers. Once this is accomplished, they can enlighten and lead you, giving you comfort, strength, hope, and power. The amount of time spent in immersion

> is never wasted, and it reverses the usual procedure we follow when we are faced with time-consuming and critical chores. Ordinarily, we think we must rush and organize to get at the work because there is so little time. If we pray at all regarding the situation, it is only briefly, because we have so much to do. Then we spend the entire day working on the chores, and end up frustrated and drained. With immersion, you spend a lot of time in prayer, obtain from the higher powers the strength and guidance you need, and then finish those same chores in a fraction of the time, ending up fulfilled and fresh.
>
> *Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power, FCWM p.22*

After many years of listening to elders, a young apprentice is sent into the wilderness in search of a spirit guide. This is accomplished by fasting, prayer, and waiting patiently for a spirit encounter. Finding a spirit guide demands inner strength. It requires a young man to go on a *hanbleceyapi* ('quiet night' or 'crying for a vision') or, in white man's terms, a vision quest. It is the time when a young seeker comes with pain and tears to plead for a vision. Going into the wilderness for four days and nights, he finds – or is shown by elders – a suitable site in which he can establish a connection with the spirit world. This ceremony can be frightening because, unless he goes into it with a pure heart, great humility and bravery, the spirit that makes contact can cause difficulties. Like attracts like. Humility is therefore essential in order to 'catch' a spirit who will help rather than hinder:

> Shamanism involves the ability to enter into an altered state of consciousness *at will* in order to acquire help from spirits. Both the spirits and their aid are manifested mysteriously. One never knows which spirit is going to 'jump in' or what it will do. The spirits seem to come of their own volition, yet once a spirit appears to a shaman, the shaman is said to have 'caught' that spirit, and a spirit that has been 'caught' can, in turn, be recalled at any time by that shaman. The actual rituals or techniques used to do this usually differ from shaman to shaman because, most often, such instructions come directly from the spirits to the shaman. Frequently, the shaman receives a sacred song – a spirit-calling song – to be sung for this purpose.
>
> *William Lyon, Sacred Ways of a Lakota, BESW p.xi*

Lakota medicine men believe that all life is in sacred motion *(taku skan skan).* They hold the entire creation in awe. Reverence, humility and awe are carefully woven into the lives of the North American shaman. But what is the difference between a medicine man and a holy man? They are not the same, as Fools Crow explains:

> Power takes over a holy person's life. It affects everything about us. So our knowledge and understanding increases faster, and before long our relationship to the higher powers and to power itself is different from that of the medicine people. Also, holy men and women have more ways to obtain power and to set it in motion. We can heal others and ourselves more easily and quickly. We achieve peaks more often, and our experience of them is deeper and more intense. Holy people can make spirit-travel trips to the dwelling places of the higher powers, and we can be transformed into animal or bird creatures who can go among people to see what is going on. It is holy people who are called upon by people and communities when situations are the most serious, and it is holy people who achieve the most impressive results. That is why there are only a few of us at any one time, and why we are the ones who can show people the fullness of power in motion. So we are called holy men and holy women.
>
> But all medicine people are different from ordinary people. They may, for the most part, behave and look like everyone else, but they are not. The way they think is different. What happens to them is different. They have insights that other people do not have. And it is these thoughts and insights that enable them to reach the peaks that are required for their work. Another thing is that when we are compared to people who do not cure or heal, and even to medicine people, we are more emotional. This enables us to reach the peaks more easily and quickly. Because of our emotions, when we do a ritual or treat a person we can quickly change our intensity as we move toward a climax.
>
> *Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power, FCWM p.28*

Fools Crow also compares himself to a hollow bone. A hollow bone becomes a funnel for power flowing down from the higher powers to the person in need of this medicine. This makes the holy man aware of his own nature:

> Another thing we holy people know is who we are. We have a clear self-image. To say this is not bragging. It is the truth. We know we are part of Sioux history, and that when we have become hollow bones, there is no limit to what the higher powers can do in and through us in spiritual things. Even our physical bodies cannot contain us, because our spirits can step out of our bodies and spirit-travel. We dream and vision and have fantastic thoughts. This begins while we are still children. Because of it, we are always ready for *Wakan-Tanka* and the helpers to take us places and show us things that others, because of their having closed minds, may never see. The power that we receive is for curing, healing, prophesying, solving problems, and finding lost

> people or objects. It is also for spreading love, transforming, and assuring peace and fertility. It is not to give us power over others, because the source of power is not ourselves. It comes to us and moves through us as hollow bones, but it belongs to *Wakan-Tanka* and the helpers. They are the source, and all thanks should go to them.
>
> *Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power, FCWM pp.28–29*

Humility again and again shows itself as the mark of a true holy man and shaman. The real holy people recognize that they are nothing and that all credit goes to the One who is pouring the power through them. They soak up this power like a sponge soaks up water. Fools Crow continues:

> Still, the life of a holy person becomes soaked with power. One way to describe it is that we are like filled sponges. We think constantly about power, and the power we are given is easily set in motion. Our lives are a dance of power, and our people see this, so they honour us. It follows then that we are always in public view, and that our behaviour must be the best. I do not argue, do not fight, do not hate, do not gossip, and I have never said a swear word. I have not chased after women, and I have controlled my lust for them. I have never touched a woman patient other than what was necessary to cure or heal them. I have not taken advantage of anyone. I have not charged for my curing, healing or advice, although I have accepted the gifts of gratitude people have brought to me. I have never touched alcohol or drugs; I have not even used peyote like they do in the Native American Church. *Wakan-Tanka* can take me higher than any drug ever could. Because of these things, and of my spiritual life, people respect me.
>
> *Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power, FCWM p.29*

Many people whom the shaman attempts to heal are blind to the spirit within and are also blind to the manifestations of that spirit. This makes the work of the shaman difficult. Thomas E. Mails, author of *Wisdom and Power,* tells the story of a miraculous dog that could walk on water. One day the dog's owner decides to show a local farmer his pet's talent. After sending his dog across the pond several times, the hunter asks the farmer if he is impressed with what the dog can do. The farmer replies that the dog is below average because "the mutt can't even swim." Fools Crow would often comment about "dogs walking on water" when he was having a difficult time getting people to understand.[1]

The rich heritage of the Native Americans has been kept alive despite everything the white man has done to annihilate it. Even today there are a few practising shamans scattered across North America, or Turtle Island as the Native Americans refer to the continent:

> The Native American form of shamanism, rooted deeply in nature and natural elements, is perhaps one of the most pure and powerful forms of shamanism in existence today. It has survived (perhaps barely) the onslaught of industrialized civilization and the persecutions of church and state. Still, very few authentic shamans remain. Most of them are hidden from our view, scattered along the back roads of reservations across this land. With few concerns for the outside world, they quietly and humbly serve those who come begging them for aid. From the viewpoint of the psychology of consciousness, shamans are master technicians at altered states of consciousness. . . .
>
> Shamanic training requires a great deal of personal suffering, social isolation, and the psychological fortitude to withstand great terror. It takes years to master the ability to self-induce a trance at will; just to reach the first Lakota 'level of power' often takes around sixteen years of training in self-control. The most powerful shamans often lead solitary lives full of arduous service with few personal rewards. Those shamans who do marry often fear for the safety of their children. Because their powers always manifest themselves on the wings of mystery, shamans are more likely to be suspected than respected. Finally, there is no graduation from the school of shamanism, for it is more a way of life than a school of techniques for effecting magic.
>
> *William Lyon, Sacred Ways of a Lakota, BESW pp.xi–xii*

A number of shamans have come to prominence during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Rolling Thunder, Fools Crow, Pete Catches and Lame Deer are a few. Among the Lakota holy men, the two best-known – because several books have been written about them – are Nicholas Black Elk and Wallace Black Elk. In the world these men inhabited, spirits and their workings were more real than the physical. Nicholas Black Elk was called a *heyoka* (sacred clown). He spoke in opposites at public ceremonies to make the audience laugh so that they could be exposed to the sacred knowledge without resistance. Wallace Black Elk was trained by Nicholas, but was not related to him:

> Traditionally, most shamans receive an 'initiatory call'. This 'call' is seen as accidental, since it most often comes during a personal illness serious enough to induce a coma (a form of trance). Such was the case with Nick Black Elk, who lay in a coma for twelve days at age nine, only to experience his life-altering 'Great Vision'. In fact, his vision was so overwhelming to him that it took him seven years thereafter to realize he had any real power or even to speak to anyone about it, for fear of being thought foolish.
>
> (On the other hand), Wallace's initiatory call was pre-planned. His tribal elders introduced him (via ritual) to the spirits when he

> was only five years old. This is rare since, in most cultures, shamanic training does not begin until after the onset of puberty; shamanism is for adults, not children. Wallace's induction occurred around 1926, a period in which the elders were certainly very much in fear of losing their shamanic lineages. From their perspective, the ability of their shamans to tap into the sacred mystery powers was their most-valued knowledge. To lose their shamanic powers was surely seen as tantamount to the death of the 'old ways', and rightfully so.
>
> Wallace Black Elk's shamanic training was also unique in that he had so many 'grandfathers' involved in teaching him the 'red road' (spiritual way of life). Normally, an upcoming shaman will train under only one mentor. It is really the function of the teacher to train the novice how to be trained directly by the spirits. That is, the advanced instructions normally come from the spirits themselves. Wallace, however, reports that he had eleven 'grandfathers' who assisted in his early training, one of whom, was Nick Black Elk.
>
> *William Lyon, Sacred Ways of a Lakota, BESW pp.xviii–xix*

When he was only five years old, Wallace Black Elk was initiated into the spirit world of the Lakota Sioux. This is his story in his own words – a rare treasure:

> My grandparents prayed to *Tunkashila* that I would be given something to hang onto that would help the people behind me, the little ones and the unborn to come. So they put up a ceremony for me and prayed. I was sitting there between Grandma and Mom, and Grandpa was performing this ceremony. When we turned out the lights, those spirits started coming right through the ceiling, and I could see lightning. They came dancing around the room, and each time they hit, there's lightning, lights. When those little spirits came dancing by in front of me, I was pretending like trying to catch them. I wasn't going to catch them, just kind of grabbing at them in the darkness. Then one of them hit me on the forehead. So I tried to catch that one. About that time another one came and hit me on the shoulder, so I tried to catch that one, too. Then another one hit me on the back, but there's a wall there, and I'm leaning against it. Still it hit me on the back like there wasn't anything there.
>
> Then those little spirits started swinging me back and forth and threw me across the room in the dark. Another pair of hands caught me. They tickled me and threw me back. They kept doing that and, on the fourth throw, they threw me right through the ceiling. I sailed through that ceiling right out into the solar system. Now that's scary! I could see all those stars around me, and they were showing me the

> powers of the universe. There was the Creator with his wisdom, and below was the knowledge (of Grandmother the Earth). So there was a man standing there, and there was a fire there. There was some water there, and this eagle was standing there on this altar. Each time it lifted its wing, there was a fire underneath it. When it pushed his wing down, there was a tremendous force of wind, like a jet flying through the stratosphere. Hot and cold air hit and vapour. It was something like that. Then it spiralled clockwise and, at the centre, the sun was sitting right in the middle. And right on the edge, this rock, this earth, was sitting there. And there were seven stones (planets), like a little race track, going around.
>
> Then the spirit said, "When you return to earth, tell your people to love each other and stay behind this sacred *chanunpa* (sacred pipe) for there is something moving up there now." That's what he said. So then they brought me back. It was like a jet with rushing and whistling sounds. When they brought me back to the altar, there was a wind.
>
> *Wallace Black Elk, Sacred Ways of a Lakota, BESW pp.6–8*

Wallace Black Elk had many visions. He felt that his challenge was to protect the tribe and keep the members on the 'red road' (*canguluta,* spiritual way of life). His most difficult challenge was to protect the tribe from alcohol. Since the Lakota had never imbibed drugs or alcohol, when the white men brought it to them, they were ruined by it. It destroyed their connection with God, and caste them into depression, causing their demise. Wallace Black Elk was given a vision by his spirit guide concerning the disaster that was fast approaching:

> The last word he said was, "From East to West those *wasichus* (white people) are flooding this land with bad water (alcohol). The four ways of life, the four colours, are all becoming friends to that bad water. The first thing that it does is distorts and twists people's minds. It hurts people's feelings. Then it destroys their brain cells and does damage to the organs and structure. It weakens the spirit. So it makes bad relations. People hurt each other by shooting and stabbing. Some commit suicide. Then some homes, nests, are broken. People get divorced. People die on the road. They create orphans. Others end up behind prison bars. Hatred and jealousy are threaded into those steel bars, those steel doors. But there will be a time I will come and pull the thread out, and there will be no more prison doors. So for that, I denounce the taste of that bad water. I don't even like the smell of that bad water. So you are going to be my friend." . . .
>
> So in my request, praying for the people, *Tunkashila* was good enough to send a delegate, a representative of His power to communicate

> that what I said was true. What our prayers demanded was right. It is true. That's the way *Tunkashila* wants us to be. So He never gained anything back from us. We create that bad among ourselves. We create it; then we try to call it devil, Satan, or evil. But man creates it. There is no devil. Man creates the devil.
>
> *Wallace Black Elk, Sacred Ways of a Lakota, BESW pp.136–37*

In the end, the 'bad water' inundated the Native Americans. Bullets may have killed them while they were fighting the white man to hold on to their lifestyle, but it was the alcohol that finished them off, and destroyed any hope of a spiritually oriented life. The shamans of North America prayed for a way to maintain their culture and lifestyle, but they were ultimately overwhelmed by the white man's aggression.

Nevertheless, shamans and shamanistic practices have survived. Many shamans heal the sick on a regular basis. Many stories can be told of who they are, what they can do, and how they do it.

Many shamans 'wrap up' before a curing and healing session. This technique involves wrapping a four-inch by sixty-inch black cloth over their eyes. This creates a dark environment, even during the daylight hours, to help them concentrate on the inner worlds:

> To reach full communion with *Wakan-Tanka* and the helpers, I must isolate myself from all distractions, including intruding thoughts, and create a quiet place where I am fully open to them and focused on the matter at hand. The black cloth enables me to do this in a very effective way. Darkness also allows my mind's eye to take over, because it can see far beyond what my physical eyes can see. Have you noticed that images stand out very well against a dark background? When the wrapping is on me, my senses are keener and come alive. Darkness helps what I feel and sharpens my hearing for spiritual sounds. Even whispers become like shouts. And if a patient is with me in the darkness, such as when we are both standing under the same blanket, we are floating around in a mood that makes us think of spiritual things and the higher powers. Then we are more open to them. These are just some of the reasons why I and some of the other medicine people sometimes cure or heal at night, and why the vision quester's greatest visions usually come to them at night. Sun is good, and light is good. But during the daytime, we see with our physical eyes and it is harder to concentrate on spiritual matters. The different ways are ways *Wakan-Tanka* and the helpers have given me to use for different situations.
>
> *Fools Crow, Wisdom and Power, FCWM pp.124–25*

One twentieth-century shaman relates what happened when she was in a hospital operating room under the influence of anaesthesia. Although she had an out-of-the-body experience, her clarity of inner vision was impaired. In other words, her visions were much clearer when not under the influence of drugs:

> A pressure on my spine and then OUT, V-vroo-mm into black nothingness, followed by strange impressions of great blocked-off areas and strips of black, and something like book ends of stone ledgers closing in behind me. Ahead, the narrowing black tunnel. I was flowing through it naked with my arms outstretched, like a diver. I knew that I was going forward and through to Somewhere, though I saw no glimmer of any opening.
>
> Propulsion into the tunnel by enforced, imposed methods, accidents, operations, shocks, sometimes drugs, rarely take us to the right places, or to the Light. Shortcuts imposed on us by ourselves or others are not a wise way to proceed. It is better to take the slow, sure way of the preamble, of meditation and work around the medicine wheel, in constant awareness of our goal 'the light at the end of the tunnel'. This is a familiar cliché, and like many clichés an instinctive, widespread recognition of a fundamental truth. There is the tunnel, and there is the Light.
>
> The tunnel is well known to shamans, who travel through it constantly in search of healing for their patients, or to obtain the help of power animals, or on other missions requiring altered states of consciousness (without the use of drugs). They have many ways of entering the tunnel and many methods of controlling their passage through it.
>
> *Evelyn Eaton, Shaman and the Medicine Wheel, SMWE p.65*

To the North American shaman, all life is sacred. All life is a gift from the Creator. Respect for Mother Earth and gratitude for all that has been given to man, are signposts along the 'red road' creating awe in the humble heart. That all life is one, that all life is connected, is more than a theory. It is a noble way of life that brings peace and contentment to the men and women who walk it.

See also: **shaman**.

1. Fools Crow, *Wisdom and Power, FCWM* p.14.

shaman (Native South American) Holy man, medicine man (Guaraní, *paí, paí guazú*), healer; the chosen one (Aztec, *nahualli*); one who communicates with

the spirit world to heal the sick, divining the future, modifying the weather, finding people or lost objects, finding fish and game, engaging in dark magic, changing events in their immediate world, and so forth.

A South American shaman lives a life of solitude, communicating with the spirit world and acting as an intermediary between his or her tribe and the spirit guides within. Shamanism involves communication with the spirit or non-material world. Anthropologist Lawrence Sullivan (1949–), a widely respected authority on South American indigenous religion, writes:

> In most cases across South America, a supernatural being makes a direct appeal to the youth in a dream, a vision, or a spell of delirium, during which a song is revealed to the novice. Many times the supernatural call brings on unusual behaviour, such as shaking, which confirms the vocation.
>
> *Lawrence Sullivan, Icanchu's Drum, ID p.392*

The shaman is also a healer, a vocation that he practises without concern for his own personal comfort. Shamans, because they often begin their lifelong vocation by being gravely sick, use the empathy and experience gained from the suffering to help cure the sick and return their people to physical and spiritual balance. Often they use their own bodies to take on the suffering of others so that the ill are relieved of their pain. This is a great service, and it earns them the respect and awe of the people whom they serve:

> Much of shamanic medicine . . . involves the personal engagement of shamans with the forces of sickness that afflict their patients. In some sense, the curers themselves fall prey to the disease insofar as they step into the path of the attacking spirit to battle it – either during apprenticeship or in the healing séance. This means that the shaman can use his extraordinary physiology on behalf of his patient in order to thwart and defeat the sickening spirits. The ordinary human, vulnerable and unprepared, need not face these powers: the sufferer has a champion who suffers for him. "One of the great merits of homoeopathic magic is that it enables the cure to be performed on the person of the doctor instead of on that of his victim, who is thus relieved of all trouble and inconvenience while he sees his medical man writhe in anguish before him."[1]
>
> *Lawrence Sullivan, Icanchu's Drum, ID p.459*

Little is known about the South American shaman's training and apprenticeship, which varies from culture to culture, and can span the length of a few months to twenty years. A shaman's training can encompass shapeshifting,

soul travel, extrasensory perception, and listening to mystical music. Among the Avá-Chiripá, an older shaman will instruct the apprentice on the greatness and difficulty of his chosen field and also will explain the benefits of a vegetarian diet.[2]

Sullivan concludes from his extensive studies that the presence of a master is required for training of the novice. The master may be living or dead. Many times it is the spirit of the master that does the actual training:

> Although the living master may not be physically present during the apprenticeship, he performs an essential role by preventing the loss or disorientation of the novice's ecstatic soul. The value of magisterial teaching inheres not only in advice on practical matters such as when to sleep, wake, and wash, what to eat, and how to prepare ritual items, but also in the spiritual direction that guides the novice through unfamiliar supernatural terrain during ecstasy.
>
> *Lawrence Sullivan, Icanchu's Drum, ID p.398*

The Akawaio people are fairly typical in their reverence for shamanism. Once the shaman begins his or her training, the candidate is sent away from his family and tribal environment:

> The apprenticeship of a shaman essentially takes place in the spirit world.... The pace of Akawaio apprenticeship depends on the capacities of the individual. A living shaman is not necessarily present at the instruction: his spirit may take over, teaching the novice even when the living shaman is physically absent. In any case, the *ladoi* ('my side') is less a teacher than a partner and ritual companion during the candidate's spiritual experiences. Thus, whether living or dead, the shaman teacher's spirit *(akwalu)* assists and guides the apprentice. The novice enters into a special period of seclusion, *bogoibe* ('being sad', 'being alone'). Food restrictions play a large role in acquiring the capacity 'to see' spirits. The goal is to become thin *(etotsali)* and light so that one can become a support *(yabon)* for the 'wings (*malik,* songs)' that carry one into ecstasy. In the 1950s, the seclusion consisted largely of travel away from home. This could last one, two, or more years. Earlier, the seclusion may have been in the mountains or along rivers far from all human habitation.... Isolation from one's natal group is absolutely essential to heightening spiritual experiences of a contemplative kind.
>
> *Lawrence Sullivan, Icanchu's Drum, ID pp.396–97*

The songs that take the shaman into ecstasy are known as *malik.* He learns these songs from his spirit guides while he is in a trance, and sings them in

order to enter the ecstatic state. The songs literally lift the shaman's spirit out of his body and into the realms of spirit:

> *Malik,* the songs sung by the Akawaio shaman, are the spirit songs of the mountain-bird beings. Essentially invisible sound-realities, *malik* can manifest themselves in forms other than shamanic songs. *Malik* designates the sound of rustling of the shaman's spirit as it takes off in ecstasy; the term designates the 'wings' that the shaman assumes in his trance state.
>
> *Lawrence Sullivan, Icanchu's Drum, ID p.397*

After an extensive study in South America, Sullivan concluded that shamans are specialists in ecstasy:

> Ecstatic specialists learn to control the passage of the soul out of the body. Using special techniques, their souls exit the body at will for various purposes. The shaman is the most important and well-known ecstatic specialist in South America. A general practitioner of the arts of the soul, the shaman not only controls the ecstasy of his or her own soul, but specializes in the knowledge and care of the souls of others.
>
> *Lawrence Sullivan, Icanchu's Drum, ID p.390*

There is a particular kind of South and Central American shaman who use *ayahuasca* (a psychedelic plant brew) in their ceremonies and to help perform their functions as a shaman. The plant from which *ayahuasca* is prepared is the liana *Banisteriopsis caapi,* which is found throughout the forests of South America. *Ayahuasca* is a Quechan name meaning 'vine of the soul'. The Mexicanized name of such as shaman is *ayahuascero,* and they are called by a variety of names through South and Central America.

The primary teacher of an *ayahuascero* is said to be the *ayahuasca* brew itself. A long purification process is also mandated requiring a vegetarian diet without sugar, salt, or even fruit. Most eat only plantain and rice for six years. Believers think that ingesting *ayahuasca* allows them to see who they truly are:

> There are six different levels of working with *ayahuasca,* and each takes approximately six years of commitment and sacrifice to master. These levels are student, *muraillo, murayo, alto muraya, altomando muraya,* and *banco.*
>
> *Christine Pratt, Encyclopedia of Shamanism, ESP1 p.49*

1. James Frazer, *The Golden Bough, GBS1* p.83.
2. Lawrence Sullivan, *Icanchu's Drum, ID* p.393.

shaman (Southern Africa) An intermediary who communicates with the spirit world in order to heal the sick, foretell the future, and adjust events in the physical world for the benefit of the community. The most common term for a shaman in Southern Africa is sangoma (from Zulu, *isangoma*). Shamanism has always been a part of African culture and is manifest in various forms throughout the African continent.

After a spontaneous calling (Zulu, *ukutwasa*) from the spirit world, the apprentice *(twasa)* is accepted by a teacher *(baba)* and taken through a period of instruction. During this time, the trainee is taught humility, purification, respect for ancestral spirits *(amadlozi);* how to enter altered states through drumming, chanting, dancing, fasting and meditation; and the importance of ritualistic herbal applications known in many African languages as *muti:*

> This call often comes in a dream and manifests as an unexplained illness of the mind and body. This strange illness gradually progresses and remains untreatable by standard medicine. Characteristics of *ukutwasa* include, but are not limited to, visions, both waking and sleeping, increased ability to see future events or through physical objects, experiences of dismemberment by animal spirits, and a sense of the self shifting into something different. When the individual recovers from *ukutwasa,* he or she is recognized as a *twasa* (novice, apprentice) and is apprenticed to a *baba* (sangoma teacher).... Candidates must work their way up through twelve stages or ranks. In each stage, they learn to work with one of twelve 'vessels' or types of spirits. Few sangoma succeed in mastering the twelfth and final stage to become a high *sanusi.*
>
> *Christine Pratt, "Sangoma," Encyclopdia of Shamanism, ESP2 p.415*

The apprenticeship of a Zulu sangoma is described by South African Zulu sangoma Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa (1921–):

> My grandfather taught me the art of the divining bones – bits of seashell, animal bones and bits of ivory, which an African witch doctor throws in order to foretell the future or to find out what the patient's problem is. My grandfather also taught me how to control my powers of seeing, and how to sharpen them and to make them more accurate and efficient. He taught me the art of breathing properly. He taught me the secret art of joining my mind to that of the great gods in the unseen world. He taught me how to sit still – very very still – and eliminate all the thoughts from my mind and call upon the hidden powers of my soul.
>
> In short, my grandfather taught me the Zulu version of what is called in English, 'meditation'. How to breathe softly and gently like a whisper until you feel something like a hot coiled snake ascending

> up your spine and bursting through the top of your head – a fearsome thing that is known as *umbilini.* This *umbilini,* my grandfather told me, is the source, the primal source of the sangoma's powers. A sangoma must be able to summon this *umbilini* at will through the beating of the drum and through meditation, very very deep meditation.
>
> *Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa, Zulu Shaman, ZSDP p.13*

For the sangoma, much learning happens during inner experiences. Stillness in meditation takes them to places on the inner planes that defy description:

> My grandfather told me that I must be able to draw knowledge from what he called 'the Hidden Lake'. There is, he said, a huge unseen lake somewhere in the spirit world where all the knowledge of the universe – past, present, and future – is to be found.
>
> "Knowledge lives in that lake in the form of little silver fishes," my grandfather said. "You must never never again say that you do not know something. You must just ask the lake, the unseen lake, to provide you with the knowledge that you seek. You are a child of God; you were created by God. Even the Christians tell you, 'All things are possible.' Because you are a tiny tiny fragment of God Almighty, all things are possible to you also."
>
> *Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa, Zulu Shaman, ZSDP p.14*

The ancestors of a typical sangoma lived inside a small hut known as a *ndumba.* Here the shaman would communicate with the ancestors, accessing them through the use of drums and the smoke of a burning *imphepho* plant. At times, the ancestors possess the body of the sangoma and speak to the patient using the sangoma's voice to describe the ritualistic cure that must be performed.

Among the many things that sangomas have in common is compassion for all living things. According to Credo Mutwa, recognizing that life or spirit exists in everything is essential for any initiate:

> My grandfather taught me that a healer without compassion for all life is like a drum without its skin. He is like a river without water; he is like a human being without reproductive organs. My grandfather warned me against misusing the great power that I was going to have over my fellow people as a sangoma.
>
> *Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa, Zulu Shaman, ZSDP p.16*

A sangoma takes an oath that he may not cause harm to anyone. In conflict with this compassionate way, however, lies the dark path of the *umtagatin*

zulu allmaloy insone, an evil sorcerer who is greatly feared. These people use their powers to harm and kill. They have moved to the dark side and do not heal or care for the community as a whole.

In common with the native shamanism of many other indigenous peoples, psychotropic plants have been used for millennia by African shamans. Vincent Ravalec, a contemporary French writer and film director, describes the Gabonese use of the *iboga* plant:

> *Iboga* is a plant with powerful and unique effects. In Gabon it is called the Holy Wood, or simply 'The Wood', because it provides the keys to a magic universe, the universe of the night, of ancestors and spirits with whom it facilitates communication, and of divination. It is at the heart of several rites, being used for spiritual or therapeutic purposes, but not exclusively either one or the other. A large number of Gabonese are involved with these rites. The two principal groups are the *ombwiri,* a brotherhood of healers for whom the root is used primarily to carry out diagnoses, and the *bwiti,* at one and the same time a religion, ancestor worship, and a brotherhood. *Bwiti* allows each participant to travel in the world of the spirits, and it also has a therapeutic aim. More marginally, and more secretly also, some use *iboga* for sorcery, like an 'invisible rifle', to cast spells. *Iboga* and *bwiti* are inseparable. Initiation, which makes each participant a *bwitist,* consists precisely in the massive ingestion of the root of the *iboga* tree, and we can really consider *bwiti* as the religion of *iboga.*
>
> *Vincent Ravalec, Iboga, IVRS p.2*

> Eating the root is a ritual act, watched over and accompanied by a *nganga,* the chief healer of the community, and guided by music and dances. Each element of the whole of the ceremony has a very precise function. The place and the articles of the service, the throbbing rhythms of the musical instruments and the dances, flickering light, and the sweet odour of torches made of *okoumé* resin that are lit throughout the ceremony; all these transport the initiates together.
>
> *Vincent Ravalec, Iboga, IVRS p.3*

See also: **hungan**.

shāmén (C) *Lit.* an ascetic, a monk, a religious wanderer, a religious mendicant; in Chinese Buddhism, a monk; from the Sanskrit *shramaṇa.* See **chūjiārén**, **guǎyù**, **shramaṇa**.

shānlín zhī shì (C) *Lit.* mountain *(shān)* forest *(lín)* person *(shì)* + *zhī* (possessive particle); a person who retires to the mountains or forests to seek the solitude and the peace and quiet that is conducive to carrying out spiritual practices; a hermit.

A *shānlín zhī shì* prefers to live in simple circumstances close to nature, believing this to be conducive to and a recipe for mental, emotional and spiritual fulfilment, and the realization of his true nature or original essence:

> Although a hermit's *(shānlín zhī shì)* life is a spartan one, it is replete with fulfilment and satisfaction. The peasant in the wilds may live a rude and ignorant existence, but he preserves his natural essence intact.
>
> *Hóng Zìchéng, Càigēntán 351, TRW p.351*

Some Daoist masters have encouraged their disciples to withdraw from worldly life for the benefit of their spiritual evolution. After some time, they have then been encouraged to return to ordinary life; for, provided they are steadfast while living among ordinary people, it is possible for them to preserve and even strengthen their inner spiritual treasure.

See also: **guǎyù**, **yǐnshì**.

shānwēng (C) *Lit.* mountain *(shān)* man *(wēng);* the pictogram for *wēng,* which carries the additional old meaning of '(neck) feathers of a bird', provides a possible metaphorical reference to the (spiritual) flight of *xiān* (immortals), since some hermits were believed to be spiritually advanced, if not *xiān,* a synonym for which is *yǔrén* – feather *(yǔ)* person *(rén).*

Living away from the hubbub of urban life, perhaps in a rural environment, can promote a return to the rhythms of nature, which is a central principle of Daoist thinking. A solitary life can provide relief from the stress of living in 'society'. This may make it easier to still the mind and withdraw the attention from the world, so that a person can seek and make contact with the *Dào* within. Leading a simple life is encouraged, as it is conducive to centring oneself in readiness for introspection and contemplation:

> It is better to associate with the hermits *(shānwēng)* of the wilds than to make Philistines one's intimates. It is better to be close to ordinary people and poor scholars than to frequent the mansions of the mighty. It is better to listen to the songs of woodcutters and herdsmen than to pay attention to street corner gossip.
>
> *Hóng Zìchéng, Càigēntán 157, TRW p.157*

See also: **shānlín zhī shì**, **yǐnshì**.

shaykh (A/P) (pl. *shuyūkh, mashāyikh,* fem. *shaykhah*) *Lit.* an elder, an old man, a patriarch, a venerable man; from *shākha* (to grow old, to attain a venerable age); anglicized as 'sheikh' or 'sheik'; a courtesy title for any venerable elderly Muslim man; a learned man, a religious leader, an Islamic jurisprudent; a mature scholar trained in the religious sciences; a cleric, a member of a religious order, a professor at a theological college; a Muslim holy man, a spiritual leader, the head of a Sufi order or *khānaqāh* (monastery), a spiritual master; a secular chief, the headman of an Arab tribe or village, usually elected; the ruler of any one of the sheikdoms along the Persian Gulf; a ruler among the inhabitants of Najd (Saudi Arabia); one of the four classes of Muslim: *shaykh, sayyid, mughal,* and *pathān.*

Traditionally, the *shaykh* is the administrative head of a Sufi order, who may or may not be the one who gives spiritual guidance. Appointed by him are one or more *khulafā'* (caliphs, deputies) or *nā'ibān* (deputies), the chief caliph being known as the *khalīfat al-khulafā'* (caliph of caliphs). Under the caliphs are various others functionaries, with different titles according to the country and the Sufi order. In North Africa, they are known as *muqaddam* (chief); in Iran, as *murshid;* in Egypt, as *'am* or *shaykh;* and in Sudan, as *shaykh.* The *shaykh* imparts instruction to novices and gives initiation. The members of the order are called *ikhwān* (brothers, sg. *akhī*), *fuqarā'* (poor ones, sg. *faqīr*), *aṣḥāb* (sg. *ṣāḥib*), or *darvīshān* (dervishes, sg. *darvīsh*). In practice, the names of the members of the hierarchy, and its extent, are determined largely by practicalities such as the size of the order, how widespread it is, the number of centres it operates, and so on.[1]

In some orders, the various officers or representatives are all known as *shaykhs.* A *shaykh al-tamassuk* ('bond-master', master of initiating), for instance, of whom there can be more than one, is responsible for giving initiation into the order, while the *shaykh al-takhalluq* (master of character traits) instructs the disciples in matters of conduct and attitude. The *shaykh* who is superior to all the other *shaykhs,* and is second only to the *shaykh* of the order is the *shaykh al-mashāyikh* (master of masters).[2]

Understanding the term in its more ancient sense, a Sufi *shaykh* is one who has been appointed to teach by his own *shaykh* or *murshid* (master). The belief in a traditional *silsilah* (chain of masters), each one naming a successor, is important in Sufism, with many orders tracing their descent to the time of the Prophet. The primary role of a *shaykh* is the spiritual guidance of his disciples:

> The friendship with a *shaykh* has no other motive than guidance in seeking God. As long as your individuality lasts, it will last; as long as you are seeking God, it will last.
>
> *'Ināyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK5 p.186*

Sufis often talk of the threefold nature of Sufism: the *sharīʿah* (external religious law), the *ṭarīqah* (spiritual path), and *Ḥaqīqah* (Reality). The *shaykh* is conversant with all three:

> The *shaykh* is the perfect man who is perfected in the knowledge of the *sharīʿah,* the spiritual path *(ṭarīqah),* and the divine Reality *(Ḥaqīqah).* He is aware of the problems of other people, their troubles and ailments, and possesses the necessary spiritual insight on how to deal with them, and cure them. He provides direction appropriate to the individual's readiness and desire for guidance.
>
> *Al-Qāshānī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah 478, GSTA p.153; cf. GST pp.104–5*

Tahānawī is more expansive:

> The *shaykh* is one who is capable of maintaining the practice of the *sharīʿat* in the hearts of disciples and seekers.
>
> The *shaykh* is one who makes God's servants beloved of God and God beloved of His servants, while he himself is the most beloved of God's servants.
>
> The *shaykh* is one who treads the Way of God, who knows the fears and perils of this Way, and who is capable of guiding the disciple, showing them what is of benefit and what is detrimental to them.
>
> The *shaykh* is one whose essence is sacred and whose personal attributes have been annihilated.
>
> Bakhtyār Awshī said, "The *shaykh* is one whose attention, when directed towards a disciple's heart, can remove the debris of the world, so that no trace of the murkiness of dishonesty or excess, or pollution of the world, remains."
>
> Sayyid Muḥammad Huṣaynī Gīsū-Darāz said, "He who merely flies through the air, or walks upon water, or predicts the future, or sees the men of the Unseen, or does not eat or drink, is no *shaykh.* The *shaykh* is one to whom the spirits and the contents of the graves are revealed, who experiences the vision of the Acts and the Attributes (of *Allāh*), who experiences the manifestation of the Essence, and who has overcome all the difficulties of the Path, and who experiences the aforesaid qualities in the present moment. Whoever he appoints as a representative *(khalīfah)* must also be graced with these attributes.
>
> *Tahānawī, Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT2 pp.467–68; cf. in SSE6 pp.82–83*

Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī adds:

Our *shaykh* is both perfect and our perfecter:
where else will you find such a fine *shaykh?*
Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasā'il, RNV4 p.154, in SSE6 p.82

The ideal of the *shaykh* is clearly that of the perfect man, but not all *shaykhs* have been of this calibre. Sufi literature abounds with *shaykh* stories, many of which tell of Sufi *shaykhs* who have not met this high standard of perfection. ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds* contains a great many such anecdotes. In one instance, an aspiring *shaykh* turns out to be not quite as spiritually advanced as he had hoped:

Shaykh Abū Bakr of Nīshāpūr one day
led his disciples through a weary way.
His donkey carried him, aloof, apart –
and then the beast let out a monstrous fart!
The *shaykh* began to tear his clothes and cry,
till one of his disciples asked him why.

The *shaykh* said: "When I looked, I saw a sea
of my disciples sworn to follow me;
They filled the roads and in my mind there slid
the thought: 'By God, I equal Bāyazīd!
So many praise me, can I doubt this sign
that heaven's boundless glories will be mine?'
Then as I triumphed in my inmost heart,
my donkey answered me – and with a fart –
my pompous, self-deceiving soul awoke,
and this is why I weep and tear my cloak."

How far away the truth remains while you
are lost in praise for all you say and do –
Destroy your arrogance, and feed the fire
with that vain self you foolishly admire.
You change your face each moment, but deep down
you are a Pharaoh and you wear his crown;
Whilst one small atom of this 'you' survives,
hypocrisy enjoys a hundred lives.
If you put all your trust in 'I' and 'me',
you've chosen both worlds as your enemy –
But if you kill the self, the darkest night
will be illuminated with your light.
If you would flee from evil and its pain,
swear never to repeat this 'I' again.
ʿAṭṭār, Conference of the Birds 2918–37, MTAN p.365, CBD pp.149–50

Other *shaykhs* in ʿAṭṭār's epic poem are more evidently humble:

A dog brushed up against a *shaykh,* who made
no move to draw his skirts in or evade
the filthy stray – a puzzled passer-by
who'd noticed his behaviour asked him why.

He said: "The dog is filthy, as you see,
but what is outside him is inside me –
What's clear on him is hidden in my heart;
Why should such close companions stay apart?"

If inward filth is slight or if it's great,
the outcome is the same disgusting state –
If straws impede you, or a mountain-top,
where is the difference if you have to stop?

ʿAṭṭār, Conference of the Birds 2954–59, MTAN pp.366–67, CBD pp.151–52

Ḥāfiẓ also regards at least some *shaykhs* of his experience as less than perfect. By "*pīr* of the magi" and "*pīr* of the tavern", he is referring to a perfect master, the perfect *shaykh:*

O *shaykh,* be not unhappy that I have
become a disciple of the *pīr* of the magi:
For he has brought me, what you promised me.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.64, DIH p.139; cf. DHWC (140:8), p.284

I am a slave to that *pīr* of the tavern *(kharābāt),*
whose grace is constant:
For the grace of the *shaykh* and the *zāhid* (ascetic)
is sometimes present, and sometimes not.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.33, DIH p.81; cf. DHWC (28:10) p.84

Keep to yourself that the mark of a man of God *(mard-i Khudā)*
is to be a lover:
For I do not see this mark among the city *shaykhs.*

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.191, DIH p.317; cf. DHWC (415:5) p.702

On occasion, however, Ḥāfiẓ does refer to the perfect master as his *shaykh.* Here, he is pointing out that intellect and personal cleverness is a barrier to inner progress:

Seek no more from me than the devotion of madmen:
for the *shaykh* of our path regards reason as a sin.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.17, DIH p.58; cf. DHWC (64:4) p.157

In fact, mystics have commonly said that there are many who would rather be a master than a disciple – for unworthy motives. Rūmī concurs:

One day, Mawlānā said: "People asked a *shaykh:* 'Whose disciple is So-and-so al-Dīn?'

The *shaykh* replied: 'What are you talking about! He is dying to become a *shaykh* himself!'" And he recited this couplet:

For any person who finds life in love,
anything besides service is unbelief to him.

Again he said: "The person who experiences the sweetness of service and of being a disciple never desires to be a *shaykh,* not throughout his entire life.

"Likewise, a prominent man sent someone to a *shaykh* and told the person: 'Have the *shaykh* send me a dervish as a companion and confidant.'

The *shaykh* said to him by way of reply: 'Rarely does one come across a dervish; they are not to be found. But oh yes, oh yes, I can send him as many *shaykhs* as he wants!'"

Rūmī, in Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 3:504, MASA1 pp.518–19; cf. FKG p.358

Ibn al-ʿArabī, who had travelled extensively in Spain, North Africa and the Middle East, meeting many Sufis and *shaykhs,* describes a spectrum of *shaykhs.* As an avowedly Muslim mystic, he advises accepting only a *shaykh* who teaches all the outward observances of Islamic religious law, the *sharīʿah,* the acceptance and performance of which is a matter of some considerable discussion among Sufis:

To revere the *shaykh* is to show reverence to none but God, so revere him out of courtesy toward God in God. The *shaykhs* are the courteous, and proximity aids them in guiding and strengthening in God. They are the inheritors of all the messengers *(rusul),* so their words come only from God. You see them like the prophets *(anbiyāʾ)* among their enemies, never asking from God anything but God.

But if a state *(ḥāl)* should appear in them which distracts them from the *sharīʿah,* leave them with God. Follow not after them and walk not in their tracks, for they are God's freedmen in God. Be not

> guided by him from whom the *sharīʿah* has gone, even if he brings news from God!
>
> When we saw that nowadays the disciples are ignorant of the levels of their *shaykhs,* we said concerning that: "Ignored are the measures of the *shaykhs,* the people of visions and firm foundation! People consider their words low, out of ignorance, though they stand in a lofty degree!"
>
> The *shaykhs* are deputies of the Real in the cosmos, like the messengers in their time. Rather, the *shaykhs* are the inheritors, those who have inherited the knowledge of the revealed laws from the prophets, though the *shaykhs* do not set down the law. It belongs to them to preserve the *sharīʿah* for everyone; it is not theirs to make the law.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:364.28,*
> *FMIA3 (2:181) p.546, SPK p.271*

Ibn al-ʿArabī then goes on to describe a *shaykh* as one who has knowledge of a person's thoughts, and who can differentiate between the visions or mystical experiences of his disciples that are "true *(ḥaqīqī)*" and those that are "imagined *(khayālī)*". He knows how to train disciples, and how to guide them concerning the nature of their thoughts – what "belongs to the soul" and "what is under the power of Satan". He can help a disciple understand the nature of his inner experiences and visions, and guide him through times of confusion. In short:

> The description which brings together everything in the station of the *shaykh* is this: He combines in himself everything of which the wayfaring disciple has need in the state of his training, his wayfaring *(sulūk),* and his unveiling, until he becomes worthy of becoming a *shaykh.* He possesses everything the disciple needs when his mind or his heart becomes ill through some obfuscation into which he falls and whose soundness or disorder he cannot discern.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:364.28,*
> *FMIA3 (2:181) p.547, SPK p.272*

He also says that whenever a *shaykh* lacks any of these qualities, then he should not be a *shaykh,* because he will do more harm than good:

> Whenever a person lacks anything which a *shaykh* needs for the training of disciples, it is not lawful for him to sit upon the couch of the *shaykh,* since he will corrupt and throw into affliction much more than he will set right, like the quack who makes the healthy person ill, and kills the patient. But when the individual reaches the point (which we have described), then he is a *shaykh* in the path of God,

> and every disciple must show reverence to him, serve him, observe his prescripts, and not conceal from him anything which he knows that God knows about him.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:364.28,*
> *FMIA3 (2:181) p.547, SPK p.272*

For his part, he says that a disciple should only remain with a *shaykh* for as long as the disciple has "reverence" for the *shaykh.* This is because, he says, when devotion disappears, the disciple will no longer receive any benefit from the company of the *shaykh:*

> The disciple should serve the *shaykh* as long as he has reverence for him. But if reverence for him should fall from his heart, he should not sit with him for a single hour, for he will not gain any profit from him and will suffer loss, since companionship *(ṣuḥbah)* only yields profit when there is reverence. Whenever the reverence returns to him, then he should serve him and profit from him.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:364.28,*
> *FMIA3 (2:181) p.547, SPK p.272*

He says that there are two kinds of *shaykhs.* The first kind are good Muslims and good human beings:

> There are *shaykhs* who know the Book *(i.e.* the *Qur'ān)* and the *Sunnah,* uphold them in their outward activities, realize them in their inmost consciousness, observe God's bounds, fulfil God's covenant, uphold the precepts of the *sharīʿah,* never interpret *(ta'awwul)* in their pious fear, take with caution,... sympathize with the community at large, never hate a single one of the disobedient, love God, and hate what God hates through God's hate....
>
> They pardon the people, venerate the old, show mercy to the young, and remove harm from the path of God and the path of the people.... They deliver dues to their owners and behave gently toward their brothers, or rather, to all people. They do not limit their munificence to those whom they know, for their munificence is unconditional. The old person is their father, their fellow is their brother and equal, the young person is their child. All creatures are members of their household after whose needs they ask.
>
> If they obey (the law), they see that the Real has given them the capacity to obey Him. If they disobey Him, they hurry to repentance and shame before God, blaming themselves for whatever has come from them. They never seek to justify their acts of disobedience as 'decree and destiny *(al-qaḍā' wa al-qadar)*', for that is discourtesy

> toward God. They are the easy, the pliant, the possessors of tender love, "merciful to one another. You see them bowing, prostrating."[3] In their face is mercy toward God's servants, as if they were weeping. . . .
>
> Such as these are the ones by whom one should be guided and whose reverence is incumbent. It is they who, "when they are seen, God is remembered."
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:364.28,*
> *FMIA3 (2:181) pp.547–48; cf. SPK p.272*

The second kind of *shaykh,* he says, are the "possessors of states *(aṣḥāb al-ḥāl)*" – of mystical experiences that come and go. He counsels against keeping their company because they can be unreliable, especially in regard to keeping "the law", the *sharīʿah.* Even if they should perform miracles, he says, this cannot be relied upon because of their discourtesy to God by breaking "the law". Nevertheless, "reverence should be shown to him":

> The second group of *shaykhs* are the possessors of states. They have a certain dispersion *(tabdīd)* and do not preserve the outward *(al-ẓāhir)* in the way that the first group does. Their states are acknowledged, but one should not become their companion. If the miraculous breaking of habit (*kharq al-ʿādah, i.e.* miracles) that may become manifest from them should become manifest, it is not to be relied upon, because of the discourtesy toward the law. For we have no way to God except that which He has laid down for us as the law. He who says there is another way to God, different from what He has laid down in the law, has spoken falsehood *(zūr).* So a *shaykh* who has no courtesy (to the law) is not to be taken as a guide, even if he is truthful in his state. However, reverence *(iḥtirām)* should be shown to him.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 2:364.28,*
> *FMIA3 (2:181) p.548, SPK pp.272–73*

Ibn al-ʿArabī then concludes by emphasizing the importance of reverence for the *shaykh.* "Know," he says, "that reverence to the Real lies in reverence to the *shaykh,*" for "The *shaykhs* are the doorkeepers of the Real. . . . Reverence is the root of salvation."[4]

It is clear that, although there are many spiritual and holy people, and many spiritual teachers, perfect saints are rare, and it is difficult for an ordinary seeker to recognize them for what they are. Mystics try to explain their greatness, and what they can do for their disciples, but – through lack of inner experience – even their disciples may find it hard to believe. As a result, they may become lax in their nightly meditation, and so miss the opportunity of receiving great blessings:

> Very few in the world know that great power is hidden in the wish of a person whose heart is in the state of dancing, so to speak – full of joy. We read in the legends of old of sages calling upon their friends, pupils or followers at a certain time, and asking them to make a wish, for they knew the moment when the wish could be granted. There is a story of Ḥāfiẓ, that near the home of the *shaykh* there were eleven pupils whose name was Ḥāfiẓ, but among them there was only one who used to engage himself in his night vigils, and the others used to rest all night.
>
> One evening the *shaykh* called, "Ḥāfiẓ!" There was only one Ḥāfiẓ awake, all others asleep. The *shaykh* was holding the bowl with the thought of the wish to be granted. With his eyes closed he gave it to Ḥāfiẓ. But then as he knew there were ten more, he again called "Ḥāfiẓ!" and as all others were asleep, the same Ḥāfiẓ came again and received the bowl. Eleven times the teacher called, and the same Ḥāfiẓ went again and again. In the morning, ten were disappointed and that one Ḥāfiẓ was found blessed with elevenfold blessings.
>
> It would not be an exaggeration if one said that even God has times when He grants wishes. And if one knows that time, one certainly becomes benefited and blessed.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK13 pp.35–36*

Rūmī says that only when a disciple is stripped of his self identity is he in a position to be really cleansed by the "perfect *shaykh*". He compares this inner impurity to the major ritual impurity, both of which require cleansing in a particular manner:

> The person of the perfect *shaykh* is like a bathhouse. When you enter the bathhouse, until you strip off your clothes and other things, you do not acquire cleanliness of your exterior, and become purged of the filth of your body, and purified of major ritual impurity. Similarly, until you become stripped of your existence and self-worship before a true *shaykh,* you will not live a new life and not reach the cleanliness of the Resurrection, and become purified from the internal major ritual impurity which is the treachery of the lower mind *(nafs).*
>
> *Rūmī, in Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 3:248, MASA1 p.322; cf. FKG (3:247) p.223*

Yet, Rūmī also says that the "true *shaykh*" routinely handles recalcitrant disciples who have done insufficient spiritual practice or "work":

> If you have done no work and are insolvent, come here!
> We've handled a hundred thousand like you.…

> The honest, true *shaykh* is one who perfects his disciple's work without the disciple knowing or being aware of it, and he conveys him to God without any effort and struggle and rendering service. . . .
>
> > How amazing! A philosopher's stone changes copper to gold.
> > Look! Each minute *this* copper *creates* a philosopher's stone.
> >
> > *Rūmī, in Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 3:450, MASA1 p.476; cf. FKG (3:449) p.328*

On the one hand, the masters exhort their disciples to greater effort in meditation and, on the other, they extol the virtues of association with a master. This association can, of course, be understood as internal as well as external:

> One day, Mawlānā (Rūmī) had pity on the group of companions, and gave them advice. He said: "By God, by God, as long as it is possible to associate with the *shaykh* and attend upon him, nothing else matters but serving him and maintaining association with him. And if it is not possible to associate with him, then it is a duty to associate with the disciples. And if this is also not possible, the best of all things is to be occupied with their words (*kalām,* teachings). And if this is also not possible, one should be occupied with worshipping God, and requesting this association with great humility and deeply sincere supplication, and seek the shade of the spiritual friend."
>
> *Rūmī, Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 3:509, MASA1 p.522; cf. FKG pp.360–61*

Saʿdī also recommends seeking the support of the *shaykh:*

> Hold fast to the saddle strap of the pure,
> for the devout are not ashamed to beg.
> Disciples are weaker than children,
> *shaykhs* are like a rampart.
> Learn how to move from a toddler:
> See how he prefers to ask for help,
> rather than seeking support from a wall!
>
> Whoever has escaped the chains of impurity
> has sat in the circle of the devout.
> If you are in need – seek this society:
> even a *sulṭān* will not fly from this door.
> Go! Gather corn, like Saʿdī,
> that you may reap the harvest of the knowledge of God.
>
> *Saʿdī, Bustān 9:249–54, KSSS p.168; cf. BSS p.391*

There is no other Sufi who praises the virtues of the perfect *shaykh* quite as profusely and as eloquently as Rūmī. He specifically describes the *shaykh* as, "a heavenly candle on the face of the earth, one like a prophet among religious communities, an opener of the door of the garden of paradise".[5] He asks, (and provides the answer):

> Who is the *shaykh?* The Ocean of Eternity itself.
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:3345; cf. MJR2 p.395*

His reality, says Rūmī, is that of God Himself:

> Know that from head to foot,
> the *shaykh* is nothing but God's Attributes,
> even if you see him in human form.
> In your eyes, he is like foam,
> but he sees himself as the Ocean;
> In the eyes of men, he is standing still,
> but every instant he is travelling.
> You still find it difficult to grasp the *shaykh*'s state,
> even though he displays a thousand of God's greatest signs –
> Oh, how dull you are!
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 3072:32711–13, KSD6 p.277; cf. in SPL p.344*

Even the *shaykh*'s words are those of God:

> The prayer of a *shaykh* is like no other prayer:
> he has been annihilated *(fānī),*
> and his words are the words of God.
> Since God is asking and begging of Himself,
> how, then, could He refuse to grant His own prayer?
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī V:2243–44; cf. MJR6 p.135*

Such a fully enlightened *shaykh* can bring light to others:

> The illumined *shaykh* induces understanding of the Way:
> he causes the Light to accompany his words.
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī V:2484; cf. MJR6 p.149*

He sees and knows everything:

> The *shaykh* who sees by the light of God
> has become acquainted with the beginning and the end.

For God's sake, he has shut the eye that sees the stable (this world):
he has opened, in priority, the eye that sees the end.

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:1567–68; cf. MJR2 p.302

He is a true lover of God, desiring nothing else. Even his body is different from ordinary human bodies:

God offered the *shaykh* all the treasures of the earth,
down to the seventh tier;
The *shaykh* said, "O Creator, I am a lover:
if I should seek anything but You, I am a sinner.
If I should bring the eight paradises into view,
or if I should serve You from fear of hell –
Then I would be a believer seeking salvation,
for both of these are of the body."

A hundred bodies are not worth a bean in the eyes of the lover
who has received the food of God's love;
And this body that the *shaykh* of vision *(fiṭan)* possesses
has become something different:
Do not even call it a body.

Rūmī, Maśnavī V:2712–17; cf. MJR6 p.163

Yet, with all this power and knowledge, their only purpose in this world is to help souls escape from their lower natures – the ego and the lower human mind *(nafs).* The *shaykh* is the "true believer" and the "well-doer" who knows how to extinguish the fire of materiality:

If you desire to remove the evil of the fire,
direct the Water of Mercy against the heart of the fire.
The true believer is the fountain of that Water of Mercy:
the pure spirit of the well-doer *(muḥsin)* is the Water of Life.
Hence, your lower mind *(nafs)* flees from him,
because you are of fire, while he is the water of the stream.
Fire flees from water because it is extinguished by water.
Your senses and thoughts are all fire,
but the senses of the *shaykh* and his thoughts are the beauteous Light.
When the water of his light trickles onto your fire,
it sizzles and spatters in agitation.
Call its sizzling 'death' and 'pain':
so that this hell of your ego may become cold,
so that it may not burn your rose garden,
so that it may not burn your justice *('adl)* and well-doing *(iḥsān).*

After that, anything you sow will blossom,
yielding anemones and wild roses and thyme.
Rūmī, Maśnavī II:1252–60; cf. MJR2 pp.285–86

Only in the shadow of such a perfect *shaykh* can the *nafs* be conquered. Alluding to a myth that an emerald can blind a snake or a dragon, he writes:

When the lower mind *(nafs)* sees you following
in the *shaykh*'s footsteps, it submits to you wholeheartedly. . . .
The questing higher mind *(ʿaql)* prevails
over your recalcitrant lower mind *(nafs)*
only when the *shaykh* becomes its helper.
The lower mind *(nafs)* is a dragon
with hundredfold strength and cunning:
The face of the *shaykh* is the emerald that plucks out its eye.
Rūmī, Maśnavī III:2545, 2547–48; cf. MJR4 p.143

The *nafs* is the 'devil', and the *shaykh* knows how it can be overcome. Therefore, he says:

The devil persists in leading astray;
The *shaykh* persists in right guidance.
Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:3589; cf. MJR4 p.469

Sometimes, the *shaykh* uses the soft soap of kindness; at others, he uses an abrasive. Either way, he is bent on reforming his disciple. Therefore, he counsels, take refuge in the *shaykh.* Explaining the *ḥadīth* of Muḥammad: "The likeness of my community *(ummah)* is the parable of the ship (ark) of Noah: whoever clings to it is saved, and whoever rejects it is drowned,"[6] Rūmī writes:

The Prophet said, "I am like a ship in the storm of time.
I and my companions are like the ship of Noah:
whoever catches hold will find illumination."
When you are with the *shaykh,*
you are far removed from wickedness:
Day and night, you are a traveller in a ship.
Under the protection of a life-giving spirit,
you sleep on the ship, and travel onwards.
Do not break with the prophet of your time:
do not rely on your own skill and footsteps!
Though you be a lion, when you travel the Way without a guide,
you are a self-seeker, gone astray and contemptible.

Beware! Fly only with the wings of the *shaykh,*
that you may know the help of the *shaykh*'s armies.
At one moment, the wave of his kindness is your wing,
at the next, the fire of his severity carries you forward.
Do not suppose his severity to be the opposite of his kindness:
understand from their effects that they are both the same.

Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:538–46; cf. MJR4 p.302

Yet, being human, a disciple cannot see who his master is and what he is doing for him. Rūmī explains that it is like a man who teaches a parrot to speak human words by concealing himself behind a mirror. The parrot looks in the mirror and thinks he sees another parrot. The man speaks from behind the mirror, and the parrot, thinking that the 'other' parrot is speaking, imitates him. Similarly, says Rūmī, when the disciple looks in the mirror of the master, he sees another human being, and thinks that he is learning from the master's human form. He does not realize that it is the "Universal Intelligence *('Aql-i Kull)*", the divine power in creation, who is really speaking to him and teaching him from within the human form of his master:

A parrot sees its reflection facing it in the mirror.
The teacher is concealed behind the mirror:
that sweet-tongued well-instructed man is talking.
The little parrot thinks that these words uttered in low tones
are spoken by the parrot in the mirror.
Therefore, it learns human speech from one of its own kind,
being unaware of the cunning of that old wolf.
He is teaching it from behind the mirror,
for it can only learn from one of its own kind.
Really, it learned to talk from that accomplished man,
but it is ignorant of his reality and his mystery.
It received speech, word by word, from a man:
what should the little parrot know of man but this?

Similarly, the disciple full of egoism sees himself
in the mirror of the *shaykh*'s body.
How can he see the Universal Intelligence *('Aql-i Kull)*
behind the mirror, when the master is speaking and discoursing.
He supposes that a man is speaking;
that Other is a mystery of which he is ignorant.
He learns the words, but the eternal mystery he does not know,
for he is a parrot, not an intimate companion.

Likewise, people learn to imitate the songs of birds,
for their language is a matter of the mouth and throat;
But they are ignorant of the bird's meaning,
except a noble Solomon of worthy insight.
Many have learned the language of true dervishes,
and have illuminated the pulpit and assembly place with it.
Yet, either nothing was granted to them except those words,
or divine mercy came at last and revealed the Way to them.

Rūmī, Maśnavī V:1430–44; cf. MJR6 pp.87–88

A *shaykh* can do what he does because he is truly free. He is an expression of the divine Power. Because he has no sins or burden of his own, he can help others be rid of their burdens. First quoting a *ḥadīth* (traditional saying) of the Prophet, Rūmī explains that a true *shaykh* is one who carries no "burden" of his own. Making a play on the meaning of *pīr* as both an 'old man' and a perfect master, he goes on to point out that the real *shaykh* is he who has lost the "black hair" of "self-existence" and has become entirely "white haired" – devoid of self:

"No burdened one shall bear another's burden,
but I am not burdened: God has exalted me."
O youth, a *shaykh* is he who has no burden,
and is like a bow in the hand in receiving God.
Who is a *'shaykh'?* An old man *(pīr),* that is, white haired.

Grasp the meaning of 'white haired', O hopeless one.
The black hair is his self-existence:
he is not 'old' until not a single hair
of his self-existence remains.
When his self-existence has ceased, he is 'old *(pīr)*',
whether he be black haired or grizzled.
'Black hair' is the attribute of sensual men:
that 'hair' is not the hair of the beard or the hair of the head.
Jesus in the cradle raises a cry, saying,
"Without having become a youth, I am a *shaykh* and a *pīr.*"

If a man has been delivered
from only a part of the attributes of sensual men,
he is not a *shaykh;* he is grey (middle-aged), O son.
When he has not a single black hair (of self-existence),
which is our attribute,
then he is a *shaykh* and accepted of God;

But if, when his hair is white,
he is still with himself (self-existent),
he is not a *pīr* and is not the elect of God;
And if a single hair tip of his sensual attributes survives,
he is not of heaven – he belongs to the world.

Rūmī, Maśnavī III:1788–98; cf. MJR4 pp.100–1

When a disciple becomes aware of the *shaykh*'s favour upon him, Rūmī advises him to beware of spiritual pride and complacency:

Explaining (the verse), "You that believe, do not advertise yourself in the presence of God and His Messenger."[7] Since you are not the Prophet, be one of the religious community; since you are not the sovereign, be a subject.

Be silent in submission under the shade
of the command of the *shaykh* and master *(ūstād);*
Otherwise, though you are (spiritually) predisposed and adept,
you will become deformed through boasting of perfection.
You will be deprived even of your good predisposition,
if you rebel against the master *(ūstād)* of the mystery *(sirr)*
who is endowed with knowledge.

Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:3348 (heading), 3348–50; cf. MJR4 p.457

Ultimately, the soul can only beg for deliverance. Addressing his own *shaykh* Shams-i Tabrīz ('Sun of Tabriz'), Rūmī writes:

O mouthpiece of God! O eye of the Realities!
O you who delivers your creatures from this ocean of fire!
You are a very ancient *shaykh,* a king unparalleled!
Take the soul *(jān)* by the hand,
and free it from the affliction of its attachments!
Solely out of self-sacrifice, do you hunt for souls *(jān ʹhā):*
but alas, which of these souls *(jān)* are worthy to be your prey?…

Oh, you are a very skilful physician indeed!
Your kindness says, "Come forward!"
Your severity says, "Go back!"
Let me know at once which of them speaks the truth.
O sun of souls *(āftāb-i jān ʹhā)!* O Shams-i Tabrīz, sun of God!
Every ray of your sunbeams is a subtle and eloquent spirit *(jān)!*

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1310:13869–71, 73–75, KSD3 p.133; cf. in SPL pp.141–42

See also: **murshid**, **pīr**, **shaykh al-tabarruk**.

1. Margaret Smith, *Rābiʿa the Mystic, RM* p.194.
2. See *Sufi Symbolism, FNI6* pp.104–5, *SSE6* p.84.
3. *Qur'ān* 48:29.
4. Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Meccan Revelations* 2:364.28, *FMIA3* (2:181) p.548, *SPK* p.273.
5. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* III:1772–73; *cf. MJR4* p.99.
6. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* IV:538 (heading); *cf. MJR4* p.302, *AMBF* 334.
7. *Qur'ān* 49:1.

shaykh al-tabarruk, **shaykh al-takhalluq**, **shaykh al-tamassuk** (A), **shaykh-i tabarruk**, **shaykh-i takhalluq**, **shaykh-i tamassuk** (P) *Lit.* the master *(shaykh)* of blessings *(tabarruk);* the master of character traits *(takhalluq);* the master of initiating (*tamassuk,* bond); three kinds of *shaykh* in a Sufi order or *khānaqāh* (monastery).

The *shaykh al-tamassuk* is regarded as the most significant of the three. It is he who initiates a disciple into the Sufi path and into a particular Sufi order. It is through him that the chain *(silsilah)* of succession or initiation of a particular order descends.

The *shaykh al-takhalluq* provides guidance concerning the character of the disciple. Literally, *takhalluq* means 'things assumed', implying character traits, as in the saying often attributed to the Prophet, "Assume the character traits of God *(takhallaqu bi akhlāq Allāh).*"

The *shaykh al-tabarruk* also called *shaykh al-barakah* (master of blessings) blesses laypeople who do not wish to commit themselves fully to the Sufi Way and become initiated disciples, but yet wish to be associated with the *khānaqāh* and receive the blessings of a *shaykh.*[1]

The manner in which Sufi orders are organized varies considerably, depending upon local circumstances and other factors. Members sometimes live together in the community with their *shaykh;* sometimes only a few disciples of the *shaykh* live with him. In some instances, members carry on with their normal lives in the world, only meeting with their *shaykh* from time to time. Often, there are many lay members who have received only the initiation of blessing *(barakah).*[2]

Various other categories of *shaykh* have been described in the organizational hierarchy of different Sufi orders and *khānaqāhs:*

The *shaykh al-sālikīn* (master of the wayfarers) is one who gives both initiation and spiritual teaching.

The *shaykh al-jadhb* (master of attraction) is one who has acquired higher knowledge through mystic revelation, as opposed to intellectual study.

The *shaykh al-irādah* (master of devotion) is the *shaykh* to whom the disciple surrenders himself, and who is effectively his spiritual master.

The *shaykh al-iqtidā'* (master of emulation) is the one whom the disciple tries to emulate in word and deed.

The *shaykh al-talqīn* (master of inculcation) is he who teaches *dhikr* (repetition, remembrance) to the disciple.

The *shaykh al-tarbiyah* (master of instruction), also known as the preparatory guide *(pīr-i dalīl),* educates the new disciple regarding manners and the goal of the path.

The *shaykh al-ṭarīqah* (master of the path) distinguishes a master of the spiritual path from a *shaykh al-sharī'ah* (master of the religious law, a preacher or religious scholar). The external religious observances of Islam are known as the *sharī'ah.*

The *Shādhilīyah* branch of Sufism, named after al-Shādhilī, and which includes many Sufi orders, speaks of three grades of *shaykh.* The *shaykh al-ta'līm* (master of the teachings) has an intellectual understanding of spiritual teachings. The *shaykh al-tarbiyah* (master of training) can provide effective guidance on the spiritual path. A *shaykh al-taraqqī* (master of ascension) has some mystic attainment within, and has the power to bring others to his level.[3]

See also: **shaykh**.

1. For most of these categories, see *Sufi Symbolism, FNI6* pp.104–5, *SSE6* p.83; see also Ibn al-'Arabī, *Sufis of Andalusia, SOA* p.58.
2. See R.W.J. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia, Introduction; cf. SOA* pp.58–59.
3. For all these categories, see *Sufi Symbolism, FNI6* pp.104–5, *SSE6* pp.83–84.

shèng, **shèngrén**, **shèngxián**, **xián** (C) *Lit.* holy *(shèng);* a saint, a sage *(shèng, shèngrén);* a worthy or virtuous person *(xián);* a holy *(shèng)* and virtuous person *(xián);* a sage; a wise and holy man; a virtuous ruler; a Tibetan Buddhist *lama (shèngxián);* a master; someone of great wisdom and knowledge, especially an ancient philosopher; a person who has attained wisdom through experience; a mystic; in Daoism, a spiritual person who has reached a state of mystical union with the *Dào;* an advanced, enlightened adept who may also be a teacher.

The *shèngrén* is referred to by many names in Daoist literature, all of which describe a person who has attained perfect balance and harmony in his actions, circumstances, and surroundings, and who – through diligent and persistent

spiritual practice – has attained the *Dào.* In the Daoist classics, *shèng* or *shèngrén* are the most commonly used terms for a saintly person or sage:

> The sages *(shèng)* and wise ones *(xián)*
> carried the mystery and embraced the ultimate Reality.
> They refined the nine cauldrons (attained the *Dào*),
> covered their traces, and hid from the world.
> They conserved their generative energy *(jīng),*
> nourished the spirit *(shén), . . .*
> and constantly preserved their true energy *(zhèng qì).*
> Having accumulated these effects over a long time,
> their bodies were transformed, and they became immortals *(xiān).*
>
> *Cāntóng qì 31, TTW p.86*

The *shèngrén* is a perfected person, both mentally and spiritually; he is the complete embodiment of *Dào.* Although living in a human form, he has progressed beyond the limitations of duality *(yīnyáng)* and is no longer concerned with comparisons, such as the differences between right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, hot and cold, and so forth. Instead, his focus is pinpointed on the middle way. His attention is focused on the *yuánguān* (primordial pass) – perhaps a reference to the subtle 'passage' in the forehead that leads to higher realms of consciousness; his only concern is to reverse the flow of his attention from outwards into the world to inwards towards the *Dào:*

> Few people know the opening
> of the mysterious pass (*yuánguān,* primordial pass):
> Extremely subtle and recondite, it contains *yīn* and *yáng.*
> Going along, you flow back into the road of affliction *(fánnǎo):*
> coming back in reverse, this is the foundation *(jī)* of sages *(shèngxián).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Yuánguān, Xiàngyán pòyí, TCC2 pp.315–16*

The *Dàodé jīng* lists the qualities that, if cultivated, will lead the *Dào*-aspirant to sagehood; by acquiring these attributes he remains mentally and spiritually centred on the One, the *Dào.* Because of his immersion in *Dào,* the *shèngrén* does not assert himself, but lives life as an ordinary, unassuming person, becoming thereby a standard or a role model for the world:

> To yield (*qū,* bend) is to be preserved whole *(quán).*
> To be bent (*wǎng,* twisted) is to become straight *(zhí).*
> To be hollow *(wā)* is to be filled *(yíng).*
> To be tattered (*bì,* disadvantaged) is to be renewed *(xīn).*
> To be in want *(shǎo)* is to possess *(dé).*
> To have plenty *(duō)* is to be confused *(huò).*

Therefore the sage *(shèngrén)* embraces the One,
and becomes the model of the world.

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 22, WLT p.134

By the same token, there are also several things that the *shèngrén* avoids. Those who attain such spiritual heights do not exhibit or use their spiritual power either in wizardry or magic, or for their own benefit. Instead, they are unassuming, contented to appear quite ordinary:

He does not reveal *(jiàn)* himself,
and is therefore luminous *(míng).*
He does not justify himself,
and is therefore far-famed *(zhāng).*
He does not boast of himself,
and therefore people give him credit *(gōng).*
He does not pride himself *(jīn),*
and is therefore the chief *(zhǎng)* among men.
It is because he does not contend *(bùzhēng)*
that no one in the world can contend *(zhēng)* against him.

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 22, WLT p.134

As a result of his union with *Dào,* the *shèngrén* becomes whole or entire; and, because of this wholeness, he remains constantly at one with the creative power that is the *Dào.*

Having attained this highest level of mystical awareness, the *shèngrén* sees the objects of creation as merely the manifestation of duality *(yīnyáng)* – impermanent illusions in constant flux. At the same time, he experiences the *Dào'*s permanent and unchanging nature. The *shèngrén* therefore remains unaffected by constantly changing worldly events and emotions – preferring to be calm over being hasty, and remaining tranquil even in the midst of "honour and glory":

Heaviness *(zhòng)* is the basis of lightness *(qīng);*
calmness *(jìng)* is the master of hastiness *(zào).*
Therefore, the sage *(shèngrén),* though travelling all day long,
never separates from his baggage-wagon *(zīzhòng);*
In the midst of honour and glory,
he lives leisurely and undisturbed by them.

How is it, then, that a king of ten thousand chariots
should conduct himself so lightly . . .?
In light frivolity, the centre is lost;
In hasty action, self-mastery is lost.

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 26; cf. WLT p.146, TTCT p.38

This passage exemplifies the deep-rooted influence that the *Dàodé jīng* has had on Chinese culture over the twenty-five centuries since it was written. Many Chinese terms and idioms incorporating *zhòng* (heaviness) and *qīng* (lightness) derive their meaning from these writings. Terms incorporating *zhòng* or its synonym *chén* are used to describe an action or a person's character, and usually have positive connotations, such as being grounded, calm and thoughtful, solid, and reliable like a rock. For example, *wěnzhòng* (steady, sedate), *zhuāngzhòng* (calm, solemn), *chénzhuó* (serious), *shènzhòng* (careful), *hòuzhòng* (thick and strong, rich and generous).

By contrast, terms incorporating *qīng* (lightness) are generally used for describing a person as being ungrounded, reacting without thinking, sprinting into action, disrespectful, light as a feather in the air that goes wherever the wind blows. Examples are *qīngtiāo* (frivolous), *qīngkuáng* (extremely frivolous), *qīngfú* (careless), *qīngmàn* (irreverent), and *qīnglǜ* (hasty). The idiom *qīng kǒu bó shé* (light mouth, thin tongue), meaning speaking impolitely or rudely, incorporates *qīng* (lightness). An equivalent idiom, *jiān suān kē bó,* means sharp and unkind (words), *i.e.* to speak frivolously and acrimoniously. By itself, *jiān* means needle, sharp, pointed. But when it is used to describe a person's character or speech, it is usually used in the negative; for example, *jiān* (crafty) or *jiān suān* (acrimonious).

In this sense, 'lightness' is associated with selfishness, frivolity, and being sharp-tongued; while 'heaviness' is associated with reliability, honesty and generosity of character, which are noticeable traits of a *shèngrén.* The "baggage-wagon *(zīzhòng)*", symbolizing the *Dào,* is a play on the word *zhòng,* thus further emphasizing the sage's "heaviness", in the sense implied by Lǎozǐ.

Here, also, "a king of ten thousand chariots" symbolizes both the ruler of a country and the ruler of the self. A person may have power and wealth, but he is no better off than anyone else, even a beggar, if he is not in control of himself, for he has lost his centredness and thus his self-mastery. The *shèngrén* on the other hand maintains his consciousness in *Dào.* Whether living in a deprived state or in abundance, the sage lives in "tranquillity" and "calmness". Because his attention is continuously in *Dào,* the *shèngrén* becomes a living example, a mentor for anyone wishing to transform his consciousness to the point where he, too, reaches the spiritual heights of the *shèngrén.*

The *shèngrén* is at a level of consciousness that transcends duality, that is beyond the distinctions between good and evil or the differences in people's outer appearance. Being in this supremely elevated state of spiritual consciousness, the *shèngrén* sees the oneness of all humanity, the permanent Reality behind the impermanent form. To him, the physical body is a temporary 'coat' that can be discarded. Similarly, because he recognizes good and evil as limited perceptions within duality, the *shèngrén* responds to the whole picture, to the potential within a person, to the inner Essence, not to a person's defects and blemishes:

The sage *(shèngrén)* has no decided opinions and feelings,
but regards the people's opinions and feelings as his own.
(He says:)

The good ones I declare good,
the bad ones I also declare good –
That is the goodness of virtue *(dé)*.

The honest ones I believe,
the liars I also believe –
That is the faith of virtue *(dé)*.

The sage *(shèngrén)* dwells in the world peacefully, harmoniously.
The people of the world are brought into a community of heart,
and the sage *(shèngrén)* regards them all as his own children *(hái)*.

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 49, WLT p.231

Living with inner harmony among ordinary people, the *shèngrén* invokes love and harmony by his uplifting influence, his benevolence, and by imparting his own love of humanity.

One of the best examples of the benevolence of the *shèngrén* is his willingness to help and teach others – as he himself had been taught by his own master – for "the guidance of the sage is needed" to pass on the torch of the *Dào:*

Therefore the sage *(shèngrén)* is good at helping *(jiù)* people,
for that reason there is no rejected *(qì)* person.
He is good at saving *(jiù)* things,
for that reason there is nothing rejected *(qì)*.
This is called stealing the light *(xí míng)*.

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 27; cf. WLT p.150

"Stealing the light" alludes to the *shèngrén*'s dexterous use of *Dào*. *Xí* means 'to enter or secure by devious means, such as an attack by night'. So perhaps Lǎozǐ is implying that the *shèngrén* makes expedient use of his knowledge of natural laws and human nature to obtain the best results.

A sincere disciple *(dìzǐ)* aims to achieve the same degree of humility as his *shèngrén,* but to do this he must lose his ego, as the *shèngrén* has done. The *shèngrén* puts aside his personality, opinions, judgments and wants, and connects to deeper aspects of character that look beyond the many human idiosyncrasies. As regards his spiritual attainment, he operates in the world as if behind a cloak of invisibility so that only true and sincere disciples will recognize him. The *shèngrén* becomes "a channel drawing all the world towards it". He lives in the world, but keeps his consciousness in *Dào:*

He, who knows the masculine *(xióng)* and yet keeps to the feminine *(cí),*
will become a channel *(xī)* drawing all the world towards it;
Being a channel of the world,
he will not be severed from the eternal virtue *(cháng dé),*
and then he can return again to the state of infancy.

He who knows the white and yet keeps to the black
will become the standard of the world;
Being the standard *(shì)* of the world,
with him, eternal virtue will never falter,
and then he can return again to the Absolute *(wújí).*

He who knows honour and yet keeps to humility
will become a valley that receives all the world into it;
Being a valley of the world,
with him eternal virtue will be complete,
and then he can return again to wholeness *(pǔ).*

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 28, TTCT p.40

Masculine *(yáng)* stands for heaven, which corresponds to the spirit or spiritual realms. Feminine *(yīn)* symbolizes earth and that which is of it. The *shèngrén* "will become a channel drawing the entire world towards it" means that the sage is a "channel", a medium for those who also wish to come into contact with the *Dào.* At the same time, the sage bestows untold benefit to all sentient beings by being a light of the world. While being in the world, he is never "severed from the eternal virtue". Thus, whenever he chooses, he can return to his original and true state ("the state of infancy"), which is *Dào,* the primal source of all. In the last line, *pǔ* (plain and simple) is freely rendered as "wholeness". The root of *pǔ* is plain wood, uncut and uncarved, which, like the infant, represents original simplicity, thus symbolizing the wholeness or completeness of original nature.

Ordinarily, human beings allows their minds to be constantly attracted by the senses. By contrast, the *shèngrén* "guards the spirit within" – he dwells in the realm of the spirit within and is automatically in control of normal human passions and emotions. This is a key difference between ordinary human beings and the *shèngrén,* whose spiritually elevated state enables him to continue living in the world, while simultaneously keeping his consciousness in higher spiritual realms:

The sage *(shèngrén)* retreats to the serenity of heaven *(tiān);* as a result, nothing causes him harm.

Zhuāngzǐ 19, CTMP p.157

According to neo-Daoist philosopher Wáng Bì (226–249 CE), another difference between the *shèngrén* and ordinary people is that, although he also has normal human emotions, the *shèngrén* is "not ensnared by them":

> That in which the sage *(shèngrén)* is superior to ordinary people is the spirit *(shén).* But what the sage *(shèngrén)* has in common with ordinary people are the emotions *(qíng).* The sage *(shèngrén)* has a superior spirit, and therefore he is able to be in harmony with the universe and to hold communion with *wú* (nonbeing, *i.e.* the *Dào*). But the sage *(shèngrén)* has ordinary emotions, and therefore cannot respond to things without joy or sorrow. He responds to things, but is not ensnared *(léi)* by them.
>
> *Wáng Bì, Sānguózhì 28, in SHCP p.238*

The *shèngrén* becomes a model for the world because he has been able to integrate high ideals with the demands of daily living:

> The sage *(shèngrén)* acts with detachment,
> and teaches without words.
> All things flourish around him,
> and he does not refuse any one of them.
> He gives, but not to receive;
> He works, but not for reward;
> He completes, but not for results;
> It is because he claims no credit
> that the credit cannot be taken from him.
>
> *Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 2; cf. TT2 p.48, TTCS p.15*

Taking the form of a record of the last words of Lǎozǐ, the *Wénzǐ* (*c.*200 BCE) emphasizes that working towards the attainment of sagehood is all about ordering and governing the self, not others; for the *Dào* is not to be found outside in the material world, but within the self:

> Saints *(shèngrén)* pay no attention to controlling others – rather to managing themselves. Their nobility lies not with (social) power or status, but rather with self-realization. Realizing themselves, they realize the limitless within. Their happiness *(lè)* does not depend on riches or honour, but rather on harmonizing *(hé).*
>
> Knowing the boundless self, they disregard worldly things, for they have attained union with *Dào.* Therefore have I said, "Attain extreme emptiness *(xū),* keep truly still *(jìng).* All living things go through their processes of activity; yet I behold their (inevitable) return (to their original state of stillness)."[1]
>
> *Wénzǐ 1, DZ746*

Because he is neither 'constrained by society nor bound to its customs', the *shèngrén* retains an empty and open mind. Consequently, he easily progresses through higher spiritual regions and perceives the inner sounds and sights at will:

> As to the roaming of sages *(shèngrén),* they move in utter emptiness *(xū),* let their minds meander in the great nothingness *(wú);* they run beyond convention and go through where there is no gateway. They listen *(tīng)* to the soundless *(wúshēng)* and look *(shì)* at the formless *(wúxíng);* they are not constrained by society and not bound to its customs.
>
> *Wénzǐ 2, TCC1 p.174*

It is said that many of those who look quite plain or even useless are often the most spiritually advanced; hence, they can be recognized only by those with eyes that truly see. The *shèngrén* hides his light, fulfils his responsibilities with humility, and showers his grace ("promotes blessings") without show:

> Heaven *(tiān)* establishes the sun and moon, aligns the stars (planets), sets out the four seasons, and harmonizes darkness and light. It uses the sun for warmth, gives the night for rest, dries with wind, and moistens with rain and dew. It creates things; no one sees it nurturing, yet all living beings grow. It destroys things; no one sees it making these arrangements, yet all living beings die. This is the divine (law) *(shénmíng).*
>
> Therefore, sages *(shèngrén)* try to be like (heaven): when they bring about good fortune *(fú),* no one sees them actually doing it, yet good fortune arises; and when they take away misfortune *(huò),* no one sees them make it happen, yet misfortune disappears.
>
> *Wénzǐ 2, DZ746*

The *shèngrén* is the wholly perfected man who has fully embodied the Daoist doctrine of *wúwéi* (noncontrivance, noncontention). He never takes credit for who he is, nor for the great things he does.

Daoists generally are encouraged to "hide their light and nurture it in darkness".[2] Thus the *shèngrén* prefers to remain in obscurity and anonymity despite having attained the supreme state of inseparable unity with *Dào.* Despite his extra-ordinary powers, the *shèngrén* is not always recognizable as a master. He prefers to "mix freely" like any other ordinary person:

> If people give up artificiality *(jiǎ)* and return to the real *(zhēn),* dismiss intellectuality and cleverness, consider essential life *(xìngmìng)* the one matter of importance, practise inner awareness (*huí guāng,* reverse the light inwardly), refine the self and master the mind, observe all

> things with detachment so all that exists is empty of absoluteness, are not moved by external things and are not influenced by sensory experiences, being light *(míng)* inside and dark *(àn)* outside, they can thereby aspire to wisdom and become enlightened.
>
> Light that does not dazzle *(bùmíng zhī míng)* progresses to lofty illumination *(gāomíng).*
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ATC p.33*

See also: **dàrén**, **xiān**, **zhēnrén**, **zhīrén**.

1. Lǎozǐ, *Dàodé jīng* 16.
2. Liú Yīmíng, *Wùdào lù, TCC3* p.530.

shèngwáng (C) *Lit.* sage *(shèng)* ruler *(wáng);* a wise and holy king. The *Wénzǐ* (*c.*200 BCE), speaking as if in the words of Lǎozǐ, says that the *shèngwáng* ruled with virtue and humanity:

> Human feelings are such that people submit to virtue *(dé)* rather than force *(lì).*
>
> Virtue *(dé)* is in what you give, not in what you get. Therefore, when sages *(shèngrén)* want to be valued by others, first they value others; when they want to be respected *(xūn)* by others, first they respect others. When they want to overcome others, first they overcome themselves; when they want to humble *(bēi)* others, first they humble themselves. So they are both noble and lowly *(guìjiàn),* using the Way *(Dào)* to adjust and control this.
>
> The sage-kings *(shèngwáng)* of ancient times spoke humbly *(xià)* to others and placed themselves after others. This is why the world gladly promoted them and did not tire of them, supported them without considering it a burden. Their virtue *(dé)* was abundant and their dispositions were harmonious.
>
> So if you know how giving becomes taking and deference becomes precedence, then you are close to the Way *(Dào).*
>
> *Wénzǐ 3, TCC1 p.201*

The *shèngwáng* acts in harmony with both natural law and human nature:

> Now it is not possible without knowledge to meet critical situations. It is easy for people of even limited intelligence to praise the merits of the ancients. Words alone are a simple matter.
>
> The sage-rulers *(shèngwáng),* however, refuse to bring into being laws that cannot be put into practice. Sage-rulers *(shèngwáng)* will not

> listen to advice that cannot be verified in practice. There is nothing greater in the fluidity of nature than creative harmony.
>
> When this creative spirit *(tiāndì zhī qì)* operates, *yīn* and *yáng* work, day and night are distinguished, and creation moves into birth; seed sown in spring matures in autumn. Both in birth and in fruition there must be the essence of the creative life *(hé).* Hence, the *Dào* of the sage *(shèngrén)* is generous and yet dignified, severe and yet benign, pliant and yet firm, stern and yet benevolent.
>
> *Huáinánzǐ 13; cf. TGLE pp.152–53*

See also: **mashi´aḥ**, **shèngrén**, **shénrén**,

shénrén (C) *Lit.* a divine *(shén)* person *(rén);* a holy or spiritual person.

In one of the fables in the *Zhuāngzǐ* (C4th BCE), Yuàn Fēng (symbolizing the disciple) is on his way to the ocean one day, when he meets Zhūn Máng (symbolizing the spiritual teacher), and asks him to talk about government by rulers at different levels of spiritual attainment. He begins by asking how the *shèng* (sage) governed, then about how a man with good and virtuous characteristics *(dé)* governed. When it comes to asking about government by a *shénrén,* Zhūn Máng explains that a *shénrén* is so finely attuned to *Dào* that he governs according to the laws of nature, thereby allowing all things to return to their true nature – and thus to natural harmony:

> Men of the highest spirit-like *(shén)* qualities ascend on the light *(guāng),* and (the limitations of) the body vanish. This we call being bright *(zhào)* and ethereal *(kuàng).* They use the powers with which they have been endowed to the fullest extent, and leave not a single attribute unused. Their joy is that of heaven and earth, and all difficulties melt away and disappear; (in them), all things return to their proper nature.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 12; cf. TT1 p.324*

Another *Zhuāngzǐ* fable describes various aspects of the behaviour of the *shénrén,* explaining that spiritually minded rulers – indeed, spiritually minded people in general – do not presume to make better decisions than nature itself. They are content to live in the spirit of *wúwéi* (noncontrivance, noncontention), acting naturally and spontaneously *(zìrán):*

> The spirit-like man *(shénrén)* dislikes the flocking of the multitudes to him. When the multitudes come, they do not agree; and when they do not agree, no benefit results from their coming. Hence there are none whom he brings very near to himself, and none whom he keeps at a great distance. He keeps his virtue *(dé)* in close embrace, and

> warmly nourishes (the spirit of) harmony *(hé),* so as to be in accordance with all men. This is called the true man *(zhēnrén).*... Being such, his course is straight and level as if marked out by a line, and its every change is in accordance (with the circumstances of the case). The true men *(zhēnrén)* of old accepted the outcome of events as the arrangements of heaven, and did not by their human efforts try to take the place of heaven.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 24; cf. TT2 p.110*

According to eighth-century Daoist master Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn, it is the depth of an individual's spiritual penetration into the inner realms of higher consciousness that determines whether or not that person is worthy to be called a *shénrén;* and the depth of an individual's spiritual nature determines whether or not that person will attain spiritual immortality:

> The *Dào* is a spiritual and wonderful thing. It is numinous and yet has inner nature, empty but without any symbol. Following or meeting it, it cannot be fathomed. Neither its shadow nor its echo can be pursued. Without knowing why, it just is – pervading all life. Yet it is never exhausted. This is what we call *Dào.*
>
> Perfect sages have realized it in antiquity and, by wonderful transmission it has come down to us today. Following descriptions, probing into principles, we find it completely real. Worthy knights of pure faith have overcome their selves and practised it diligently. Once the mind is emptied and the spirit like a valley, the *Dào* alone will come to assemble. Once the *Dào* has become strong, it imperceptibly works changes in body and spirit. The body pervaded by the *Dào* and unified with the spirit is what constitutes a spirit man *(shénrén).*
>
> His spirit and inner nature are empty and fused into one. His bodily structure no longer changes or decays. Once his body is united with the *Dào,* there is no more life or death. When withdrawn from life, the body is in harmony with the spirit; when apparent to the common world the spirit is in harmony with the body. Therefore the spirit man *(shénrén)* is able to tread on water or fire without suffering harm. He can stand in the sunshine or the moonlight without throwing a shadow. Survival and destruction resting with himself, he passes in and out of the spaceless. If even the coarse substance of his body can achieve emptiness and subtlety, how much more should his numinous wisdom excel in depth and remoteness? The *Shēngshén jīng* says: "When body and spirit are unified, the true body is born." The *Xīshēng jīng* has: "When body and spirit are in harmony one can live forever."[1]
>
> The *Dào* of emptiness and nonbeing can be deep or shallow. When it is deep, it reaches as far as mind and body. When it is shallow, it goes

> only as far as the mind. The spirit man *(shénrén)* is one whose *Dào* reaches to both. One whose *Dào* only goes to the mind will merely realize insight and awakening, but his personal body will not be spared.
>
> *Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn, Zuòwànglùn 7:14a–b, SSTK pp.107–8*

See also: **zhēnrén**.

1. *Cf. Xīshēng jīng* 5:14a, *TMPS* p.251.

shénxiān (C) *Lit.* a holy *(shén)* immortal *(xiān);* a Daoist immortal. See **xiān**.

shepherd (He. *roʿeh,* Gk. *poimēn*) An ancient metaphor and title for both God and His saviours or masters; traceable in Sumerian and ancient Mesopotamian cultures, found in the writings of Zarathushtra, commonly used in biblical imagery, and encountered in the parables of Jesus and later mystics; also used in the Hebrew Bible for the leaders of Israel, and in Manichaeism for leaders of Manichaean communities; also, as Poimandrēs ('Shepherd-Man'), a personification of the divine *Nous* in the first book of the Hermetic literature.

The shepherd is a part of an extensive family of metaphors including sheep (the disciples), the flock (the community of disciples), the fold (the protecting walls of a master's teachings and his sheltering hand), thieves, robbers and wild animals (the human passions and the powers of the devil), the Wolf (the devil himself), the wilderness (this world), the false shepherds (false prophets and pseudo-masters), green and fertile pastures (the inner realms), and so on.

The metaphor is easy to understand, and illuminates the relationship between the spiritual master and his disciples, and ultimately between God and man. Just as a shepherd takes great care of the sheep on behalf of their owner, so too does a master take care of the souls allotted to him by God. Disciples, and indeed all the souls in this world, are like sheep, because they do not really know what is best for them. Moreover, they are all likely to follow each other regardless of whether or not they actually know where they are going. Sheep are also very nervous creatures and easily get scattered. The firm guidance of the shepherd is therefore required.

All these are characteristics, at a spiritual level, of the care and love extended by a master to his disciples. He never lets a disciple go so astray that he cannot bring him back to the fold. Further, just as the shepherd, especially in Middle Eastern countries, leads his sheep to pasture, so too does a master lead his disciples to pasture in the sweet meadows of the Word, in the higher spiritual realms.

Coming from a largely agrarian culture, Middle Eastern writers were very fond of the metaphor, which is found extensively in both the Hebrew Bible and

the New Testament. Some of the biblical patriarchs and prophets – Abraham, Jacob, King David, Moses, and Amos – even worked as shepherds earlier in their lives, which is an appropriate symbol of their humility; it cultivated in them the qualities of caring and nurturing embodied by the shepherd:

> Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, "I am no prophet *(navi),* neither am I a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman *(bakor),* and a dresser of sycamore trees: and the Lord took me while I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"
>
> *Amos 7:14–15, JCL*

The prophet Moses became traditionally known as the "faithful shepherd *(ra'ayah mehemna)*" for leading the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, through the wilderness for forty years, and finally to Canaan, the promised land. He was faithful in that he never gave up his task despite the people's intransigence; they continually expressed their regret at having followed Moses into the desert and wanted to abandon their journey.

The biblical book of *Psalms,* which is grouped with the wisdom literature, is a good place to start a brief survey of the use of the term. From a study of the psalms alone, it is clear that the shepherd was commonly used as simile for *Yahweh,* conceived as the protector and guardian of Israel. In the more mystical psalms, the metaphor of the shepherd is used in a beautifully devotional sense.

The psalms themselves are a mixed collection of writings, as the gnostics of old also observed. Penned by a variety of hands and covering an assortment of religious themes, only some have a mystical meaning. Some seem to deal specifically with the historical and political problems of the Israelites, and from their general tone it seems unlikely that another level of allegorical meaning is implied. Others possess a deeply devotional character that is entirely mystical in nature. Probably the most well-loved of these is the twenty-third psalm in which the soul is portrayed as a sheep led to green and fertile pastures by her divine shepherd. It begins with a summary of the psalm's imagery:

> The Lord *(Yahweh)* is my shepherd *(ro'eh):*
> I shall not want.
> He makes me to lie down in green pastures:
> He leads me beside the still waters.
>
> *Psalms 23:1–2; cf. KJV*

The soul feels surrounded and protected by divine love, placing complete faith and reliance in Him. Feeling enveloped by the love and presence of

God, the soul has no other desires. It rests peacefully in the enjoyment of the blissful inner realms ("pastures") of creation, "green" and fertile with God's creative power. She is led by her divine shepherd "beside the still waters" into the inner "pastures", where the turmoil of the world is left behind. Here, the Living Water of the divine Music flows in abundance, bringing life, peace, and stillness.

There are other psalms, too, where similar sentiments are expressed:

> *Yahweh* is the strength of His people,
> a saving fortress for His anointed.
> Save Your people! Bless Your heritage!
> Shepherd them; carry them for ever!
>
> *Psalms 28:8–9, JB*

Interpreting the nationalistic imagery mystically, the "people" of *Yahweh,* and "His anointed" are His devotees. They are His "heritage" because they are the sons who return to Him.

One of the richest sources of the shepherd metaphor and its associated imagery is the biblical *Song of Songs.* Whether it is interpreted literally or symbolically, there is no doubt that one of its central characters or metaphors is the shepherd. Literal interpretations, however, have difficulty fitting the story together in a coherent fashion, for the beloved is at one time a king and at another a shepherd, while the bride is at first taken as a simple country girl, but is later described as a prince's daughter.

Some interpreters have felt it necessary to invent an eternal triangle of a country girl, her shepherd beloved and King Solomon, who eventually wins her love, taking her away from the shepherd. But the explanation remains unsatisfactory. Understood mystically, on the other hand, there are no such problems, for the shepherd, quite naturally, is also the mystic king. And the soul is both a simple country girl, living in the desert of this world, and a prince's daughter, being of the divine essence:

> LOVER: Tell me then, you whom my heart loves:
> where will you lead your flock to graze,
> where will you rest it at noon?
> That I may no more wander like a vagabond
> beside the flocks of your companions.
>
> CHORUS: If you do not know this, O loveliest of women,
> follow the tracks of the flock,
> and take your kids to graze
> close by the shepherds' tents. . . .

LOVER: My beloved went down to his garden,
to the beds of spices,
to pasture his flocks in the gardens
and gather lilies.
I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.
he pastures his flock among the lilies.

Song of Songs 1:7–8, 6:2–3, JB

The lover is talking to the beloved. "Noon" is the heat of the day, symbolizing the burning heat of the physical universe. She wishes to be with her beloved away from the troubles of this world, and away, too, from the constant throng of disciples ("companions") around her beloved, all wanting to spend some time with him.

So she asks where he goes with his flock of disciples, and the 'chorus' advise her to go close to where the shepherds live, for that is where he will have taken them. The place where the masters 'live' is the inner realms, or eternity. She therefore replies that her beloved has gone to the "gardens", an ancient metaphor for the inner realms, describing these inner pastures as sweet-scented and laden with flowers.

The *Psalms* and the *Song of Songs* are both grouped with the wisdom literature, and elsewhere in this collection of books, the metaphor of the shepherd is used sparingly. In the epilogue to *Ecclesiastes,* however, the writer makes a direct and unequivocal comparison of the sage or master to a shepherd, and of his disciples to his flock. By way of explanation for his pithy book, he writes:

Kohelet tried to write in an attractive style
and to set down truthful thoughts in a straightforward manner.
The words of the sages are like goads, like pegs driven deep:
a shepherd *(roʿeh)* uses these for the good of his flocks.

Ecclesiastes 12:10–11, JB

Writing of God as the teacher and shepherd who gathers in his scattered flock, Jesus ben Sirach writes:

Man's compassion extends (only) to his neighbour,
but the compassion of the Lord extends to everything that lives,
rebuking, correcting and teaching,
bringing them back as a shepherd *(poimēn)* brings his flock.

Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach 18:13, JB

The imagery of the leaders of Israel as shepherds is used by a number of the Hebrew prophets. Ezekiel, for instance, is scathing, describing them

as shepherds *(roʿeh)* who have fattened themselves, but have failed to feed their flock:

> The word of *Yahweh* was addressed to me as follows: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds *(roʿim)* of Israel; prophesy and say to them, 'Shepherds *(roʿim),* the Lord *Yahweh* says this: Disaster is in store for the shepherds *(roʿim)* of Israel who feed themselves! Are not shepherds *(roʿim)* meant to feed a flock? Yet you have fed on milk, you have dressed yourselves in wool, you have sacrificed the fattest sheep, but failed to feed the flock. You have failed to make weak sheep strong, or to care for the sick ones, or bandage the injured ones. You have failed to bring back strays or look for the lost. On the contrary, you have ruled them cruelly and harshly. For lack of a shepherd *(roʿeh),* they have been scattered, to become the prey of all the wild animals; they have been scattered. My flock is astray on every mountain and on every high hill; My flock has been scattered all over the world; no one bothers about them, and no one looks for them.'"
>
> *Ezekiel 34:1–6, NJB*

Therefore, he says, speaking in the name of God:

> "'Very well, shepherds *(roʿim),* hear the word of *Yahweh:* As I live, I swear it – declares the Lord *Yahweh* – since My flock has been pillaged and for lack of a shepherd *(roʿeh)* is now the prey of every wild animal; since My shepherds *(roʿim)* have ceased to bother about My flock, since My shepherds *(roʿim)* feed themselves rather than My flock, very well, shepherds *(roʿim),* hear the word of *Yahweh:* The Lord *Yahweh* says this: Look, I am against the shepherds *(roʿim).* I shall take My flock out of their charge and henceforth not allow them to feed My flock. And the shepherds *(roʿim)* will stop feeding themselves, because I shall rescue My sheep from their mouths to stop them from being food for them.
>
> "'For the Lord *Yahweh* says this: Look, I Myself shall take care of My flock and look after it. As a shepherd *(roʿeh)* looks after his flock when he is with his scattered sheep, so shall I look after My sheep. I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered on the day of clouds and darkness. I shall bring them back from the peoples where they are; I shall gather them back from the countries and bring them back to their own land. I shall pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines, and in all the inhabited parts of the country. I shall feed them in good pasturage; the highest mountains of Israel will be their grazing ground. There they will rest in good grazing grounds; they will browse in rich pastures on the mountains of Israel. I Myself shall

> pasture My sheep, I Myself shall give them rest – declares the Lord *Yahweh.* I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the injured, and make the sick strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd *(roʿeh)* to them. . . .
>
> "'I shall raise up one shepherd *(roʿeh),* My servant David, and put him in charge of them to pasture them; he will pasture them and be their shepherd *(roʿeh).* I, *Yahweh,* shall be their God, and My servant David will be ruler among them. I, *Yahweh,* have spoken. I shall make a covenant of peace with them; I shall rid the country of wild animals. They will be able to live secure in the desert and go to sleep in the woods. I shall settle them round My hill; I shall send rain at the proper time; it will be a rain of blessings. The trees of the countryside will yield their fruit and the soil will yield its produce; they will be secure on their soil. And they will know that I am *Yahweh* when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the clutches of their slave-masters. No more will they be a prey to the nations, no more will the wild animals of the country devour them. They will live secure, with no one to frighten them. I shall make splendid vegetation grow for them; no more will they suffer from famine in the country; no more will they have to bear the insults of other nations. So they will know that I, their God, am with them and that they, the house of Israel, are My people – declares the Lord *Yahweh.* And you, My sheep, are the flock of My human pasture, and I am your God – declares the Lord *Yahweh.*'"
>
> *Ezekiel 34:7–16, 23–31, NJB*

When *Yahweh* speaks of pasturing the Israelites like sheep, Ezekiel is, of course, speaking in metaphors. Also, since King David (*r.*1010–970 BCE) lived about four centuries before Ezekiel (*fl.c.*593–571 BCE), the "one shepherd, my servant David" is generally understood as a prophecy of a spiritual teacher or leader of the lineage of David, since the Jews looked back to David as the ideal king-prophet. The longing for a spiritual and temporal messiah to lead them has been a perennial Jewish theme as they became scattered in an ultimately worldwide diaspora. Christianity has interpreted the passage as a prophecy concerning Jesus as the messiah.

Ezekiel's theme was not original. It is an expansion of a very similar message given by Jeremiah (*b.c.*646 BCE),[1] who could have been Ezekiel's contemporary for some while. Not long after, Zechariah (*fl.*520–518 BCE)[2] repeats the same prophecy ("trouble is coming to the worthless shepherd").[3] Both these prophets castigate those who are supposed to have been in charge of Israel for their lack of true care and concern, for they neither look for strays nor heal the wounded. Jeremiah also prophesies concerning the coming of a messiah ("a righteous branch unto David"),[4] who will be a true shepherd, and will seek out the lost and scattered sheep.

It is clear that the biblical prophets are the source of the metaphorical language later echoed in the words of Jesus. In fact, it is from the teachings of Jesus that most Christians are familiar with metaphorical references to the shepherd and his flock. In *Matthew,* for instance, Jesus describes his disciples as his "little ones", indicating that they should become as innocent and trusting as a little child. He then relates the parable of the sheep that went astray:

> Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones; . . .
> What think you? If a man has a hundred sheep,
> and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine,
> and go into the mountains, and seek the one that has gone astray?
> And if he finds it, verily I say unto you, he rejoices more of that sheep,
> than of the ninety-nine that did not go astray.
> Even so, it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven,
> that one of these little ones should perish.
>
> *Matthew 18:10, 12–14; cf. KJV*

He says that he has been entrusted with a particular flock, and that it is his responsibility that none of these sheep should go astray. That is, even if one of them appears to have strayed from the practice of his teachings either by giving up their meditation or by improper living, the master – passing no judgment and biding his time – simply does whatever is necessary to bring that sheep back into the fold. But only a master can do this, for only he has the inner power and knowledge to adjust the destiny of his disciples. He can and does guide his disciples' lives from within in such a way that, whatever the outward appearances may be, they are never permitted to go so hopelessly astray that they cannot be brought back to the fold again.

A master never makes a mistake: every soul initiated or baptized by him is destined ultimately to go back to God. He is the good shepherd and sees to it that not "one of these little ones should perish." As Jesus says to his disciples in Luke's gospel:

> Fear not, little flock:
> for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
>
> *Luke 12:32, KJV*

Mark himself also says that when Jesus saw the people who had gathered around him, he was filled with compassion:

> And Jesus, when he came out, saw a great many people, and was moved with compassion towards them, because they were like sheep with no shepherd *(poimēn):* and he began to teach them many things.
>
> *Mark 6:34; cf. KJV*

Frustratingly, Mark, the earliest gospel writer, makes no mention of what the "many things" taught by Jesus actually were. Matthew and Luke, however, who had access to a collection of the sayings of Jesus, insert them into their respective narratives at various suitable points.

In *Matthew,* when Jesus sends out his twelve apostles, he instructs them not to go to the Gentiles and Samaritans, but to "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."[5] The instruction is in keeping with the Jewish tone of Matthew's gospel, and is clearly an addition made by Matthew, for it is missing from Mark's gospel,[6] which is Matthew's source of this incident. It is similarly absent from *Luke,*[7] who likewise copied his narrative from *Mark*.

Matthew, who is evidently steeped in the tradition of the biblical prophets, far more than the other evangelists, uses the same metaphor once again in his mini-apocalypse, a section expanded from his source in *Mark,* where all "nations" are gathered before the "Son of Man" on the Last Day:

> And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd *(poimēn)* divides his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
>
> *Matthew 25:32–33; cf. KJV*

It is in John's gospel, however, that the metaphor is used in its most elaborate form. Here, Jesus is quoted as saying:

> "Verily, verily, I say unto you,
> He that enters not by the door into the sheepfold,
> but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.
> He that enters by the door is the shepherd *(poimēn)* of the sheep.
> To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice:
> and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.
> And when he leads forth his own sheep, he goes before them,
> and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
> And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him:
> for they know not the voice of strangers. . . ."
>
> This parable spoke Jesus unto them: but they did not understood what he was saying to them. Then said Jesus unto them again:
>
> "Verily, verily, I say unto you,
> I am the door of the sheep.
> All who came before me are thieves and robbers:
> but the sheep did not heed them.
> I am the door: by me if any man enter in,
> he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

The thief only comes to steal, and to kill, and to destroy:
I have come that they might have life,
and that they might have it more abundantly.

"I am the good shepherd *(poimēn):*
the good shepherd *(poimēn)* gives his life for the sheep.
But he who is a hireling, and not the shepherd *(poimēn),*
whose own the sheep are not, sees the Wolf coming,
and leaves the sheep, and flees:
And the Wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep.
The hireling flees, because he is a hireling,
and cares not for the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd *(poimēn),*
and know my sheep, and am known of mine.
As the Father knows me, even so know I the Father:
and I lay down my life for the sheep."

John 10:1–15; cf. KJV, RSV

Jesus first presents a parable, and then gives his explanation. He says that he is the "door into the sheepfold": only through him, the living shepherd, can his disciples "enter in". The door also refers to the single eye,[8] the "strait gate",[9] the hidden inner gateway by which the soul and mind can leave the body, travel in the heavenly realms, and then return at will. As Jesus says, they "shall go in and out and find pasture," pasture being the inner realms. Extending the imagery, Jesus says that he is also the doorkeeper who opens the door for his disciples. He waits for his disciples inside, in his spiritual form as the divine Word.

"And the sheep hear his Voice," the music of the divine Word, and "they know his Voice". A shepherd or master comes for a particular allotment of souls, and they are the ones that recognize and follow him. He gathers them individually: he calls "his own sheep by name", and only they follow him. He "leads them out" of the body: they meet him at the single eye, and he "goes before them", higher and higher into the inner spiritual realms on the journey back to God. And they "follow him: for they know his Voice". In this way, they "shall be saved". Salvation comes automatically when the soul rises up on the divine Word, for it carries the soul back to God.

Jesus therefore says, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Life means inner life or spiritual life. Otherwise, someone who is already alive cannot be given more life, in a physical sense. In fact, he says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep." He means that a master sacrifices his entire life in the service of his disciples. Additionally, he takes the burden of his disciples sins upon

his own self, either upon his own body, or through the master's wealth of the Word. As Jesus again reiterates:

> "My sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me:
> And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish,
> neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.
> My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all,
> and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.
> For I and my Father are one."
>
> *John 10:27–30; cf. KJV*

He is the "good shepherd" who knows his sheep and is "known of them". In this same discourse, Jesus also says:

> "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold;
> Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice,
> and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd *(poimēn).*"
>
> *John 10:16, KJV*

The "sheep . . . which are not of this fold" is probably a reference to the disciples of John the Baptist.

Echoes of both the gospel parables and the *Song of Songs* are found throughout Christian literature. In the *Acts of Thomas,* Jesus is addressed as:

> Good shepherd,
> you who have given yourself for your own sheep,
> and have vanquished the Wolf and redeemed your own lambs,
> and led them into a good pasture:
> We glorify and praise you and your invisible Father,
> and your Holy Spirit, the mother of all creation.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 39; cf. AAA p.181, ANT p.384*

In references to the gospel parables, many later Christians naturally referred to Jesus as the shepherd. Ilias the Presbyter, for example, quite naturally identifies the shepherd of the *Song of Songs* with the "good shepherd" of John's gospel:

> The soul that enjoys God's love is bold enough to say to him: "Tell me, good shepherd, where you graze your sheep, and where you rest your lambs at noon, so that by following them I may avoid becoming like one encircled by the flocks of your companions."
>
> *Ilias the Presbyter, Gnomic Anthology IV:96, Philokalia, PCT3 p.59*

Among the gnostic writings, the *Authoritative Teaching,* a tractate from the Nag Hammadi library, also speaks of the shepherd, the fold, the door, the garment, and the bridal clothing – all common mystic metaphors of the time, stemming from their seminal use in John's gospel. This tractate is concerned largely with the story of the soul, and refers to many of the well-known parables of those times. In this passage, the writer is speaking of the transitory attractions of the world laid out before the mind and body by the "Adversary" (the devil) in order to trap the soul into remaining here, taking birth in successive bodies. But the soul runs into the fold of "her true shepherd" and is saved:

> Now all such things the Adversary prepares beautifully and spreads out before the body, wishing to make the mind incline towards one of them and overwhelm her, like a hook drawing her by force in ignorance, deceiving her until she conceives evil. Then she bears the fruit of matter, and conducts herself in uncleanness, pursuing many desires and covetousnesses, while fleshly pleasure draws her in ignorance.
>
> But the soul – she who has tasted these things before – realized that sweet passions are transitory, for she had learned about evil. So she went away from them and entered into a new way of life. Consequently, she despises (detaches herself from) this life, because it is transitory. And she looks for those foods that will take her into (eternal) life, leaving behind her those deceitful foods. And she learns about her light, as she goes about stripping off this world, while her true garment clothes her within, and her bridal clothing is placed upon her in beauty of mind, not in pride of flesh. And she learns about her (inner) depth and runs into her fold, while her shepherd stands at the door. In return for all the shame and scorn, then, that she received in this world, she receives ten thousand times the grace and glory.
>
> She returned the body to those who had given it to her (the powers that administer *karma* and rebirth), and they were confounded, while the dealers in bodies sat down and wept because they were not able to do any business with that body, nor did they find any merchandise except it. They had endured great labours, shaping the body for the soul, wishing to strike down the invisible soul. They were therefore thwarted in their work; they suffered the loss of the one for whom they had laboured hard. For they had not realized that she had an invisible spiritual body. They thought, "We are the shepherd who feeds her." They did not realize that she knew another way, which is hidden from them. This her true shepherd had taught her in knowledge.
>
> *Authoritative Teaching 31–33; cf. NHS11 pp.278–83*

Jesus was not the only master of his era to speak of the master as a shepherd. It was a prevalent metaphor, commonly occurring in the Manichaean literature. The three masters who are mentioned by name – Mānī, Jesus, and one of Mānī's successors, Mār Zakū – are all given the epithet of shepherd. One such hymn in Parthian refers to all three masters:

> Reverence to you, son of greatness (Mānī),
> who has set your righteous ones free;
> Now also protect the teacher Mār Zakū,
> the great shepherd of your bright flock.
> Wake up, brothers, chosen ones:
> On this day came the salvation of souls, . . .
> when Jesus, the Son of God, went into *parinirvāṇa.*
> *Manichaean Hymns, MM3 p.881ff., RMP bx–by; cf. GSR p.71, ML p.106*

The reference to the death of Jesus as passing "into *parinirvāṇa*", stems from Mānī's teaching in Buddhist countries. Another Parthian hymn hails Mānī as life-giver, deliverer, redeemer, and shepherd:

> You have come in peace, giver of life to souls,
> Lord Mānī, Messenger of Light!
> You have come in peace, O deliverer of souls!
> You have come in peace, O great redeemer!
> You have come in peace, O shepherd!
> *Manichaean Hymns, HMV p.304ff.; cf. GSR p.84, ML p.11*

The saviour, says another text, also adding metaphor to metaphor, is shepherd, helmsman, and sovereign in the midst of the turbulence of this world:

> The saviour comes like a humble shepherd among wild animals,
> a helmsman in the midst of the stormy sea,
> a sovereign in the midst of fight and battle.
> *Manichaean Hymns, MPM (M819) 797ff.; cf. ML pp.120–21*

In another text, a poignant song of longing at the death of Mār Zakū, an unknown disciple describes his master's qualities with the evident affection and love of a devotee:

> O shepherd, O great lamp that swiftly died away:
> black turned our eye, languid and sad, our hearts.
> O hero, O battle-stirrer who left his army:
> terror seized the troop, and the military column was confused.

O great tree whose stature was broken:
tremor came to the birds, whose nest was destroyed.
O great sun who turned away from this world:
dark became our eye, for the light was hidden.

O greatest caravan-leader who left his caravan
in deserts, plains, mountains, and valleys.
O heart and soul that vanished from us:
we want your skill, your reason, and your glory!
O living sea that has become dry:
the course of the rivers has been held back,
and they run no longer.
O green mountain where sheep graze:
milk for the lambs has finished,
sorrowfully the sheep are sighing.
O mighty father whose many sons are now suffering –
all the children who have become orphans.
O Lord who spared no pains, who was in want;
in everything he kept the house of God thriving.
O great spring whose source has been closed:
that sweet refreshment has been held back from our mouth.
O bright lamp whose light-splendour now shines for others:
to us has come the dusk.

O Mār Zakū, shepherd, blessed teacher,
without reason, separation from you now has come to us.
We shall no longer look unto your shining eyes,
and no longer listen to your sweet words.
O God *Srōshāv* (Sound),[10] with the sweet Name,
brilliant Lord, there is no one like you among all gods.

We are depressed, sorrowfully we sigh, weep,
we will always remember your love.
You were the throne-keeper in all realms,
sovereigns and magnates reverenced you.
Lovely and kind was your nature,
mild your talk that never showed bitter anger.

Great giant, strong in patience,
you tolerated everybody, you were renowned for it.
Righteous, innocent, merciful, giftful,
generous, compassionate, kind father,
who made happy the oppressed;

You who saved numberless souls from distress
and guided them to their home.
Strong, good, powerful one, who –
like all messengers, *buddhas* and gods –
have now gone to your throne:
To you first I pay homage:
I, the smallest of your sons who has been left an orphan
and an exile by you, dear father.

Come hither, let us write a letter
to the beneficent king of light.
From him we will beg: forgive our sins!

Elegy on the Death of Mār Zakū, MM2 p.865ff., RMP ch;
cf. GSR pp.87–88, ML pp.31–32

In one of the Coptic psalms, the Lord, the paraclete or mediator, and the divine *Nous* (Mind, Intelligence) of the all-pervading Holy Spirit or divine Word are all identified as one. They are also identified with "Wisdom", the heavenly "Bread" or Living "Water" – and with the saviour, "the good shepherd of his sheep":

Hail, our Lord, the paraclete;
Hail, the Spirit of Truth....
Hail, *Nous* of the Father:
garland of renown of the aeons (inner realms),
the Holy Spirit that permeates the universe,
perfect love of the Father....

Hail, Bread ... holy imperishable Water:
unfathomable hope of life,
Wisdom full of mystery.

Hail, gate of light, the straight way of life:
good shepherd of his sheep,
the hope of the life of the souls of men....

We worship you, the paraclete, we implore you ...
to forgive us our sins....
For there is none in this flesh
that is free from sin in his heart.
You alone are the knower of hearts:
forgive us what we have done.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXIX; cf. MPB pp.24–25

Other psalms speak of the shepherd who seeks out his sheep:

> There is a shepherd giving pasture:
> he came seeking his sheep.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book, MPB p.172*

And the sheep who seek their shepherd:

> I am like a sheep seeking for its pastor;
> Lo, my true shepherd I have found,
> he has brought me to my fold again.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCLIII, MPB p.63*

Echoes of the same biblical parables are also found in the Mandaean texts. In the *John-Book,* the saviour affirms:

> A shepherd am I who loves his sheep,
> sheep and lambs I watch over.
> Round my neck, I carry the sheep,
> and the sheep from the hamlet stray not. . . .
> I . . . water them with the cup of my hand,
> until they have drunken their fill.
> I bring them unto the good fold,
> and they feed by my side.
> From the mouth of Euphrates,
> from the mouth of Euphrates the radiant,
> things of marvellous goodness I brought them. . . .
> I cleansed them and washed them,
> and made them to smell the sweet Fragrance of Life.
> *Mandaean John-Book, JMM pp.40–41; cf. GJB p.81, JM pp.44–45*

The divine shepherd continues:

> When then I entered the house,
> I mounted up to the highest place,
> and I call to my sheep.
> To the sheep in my care do I call.
> I pipe to them, I get them to hear,
> so that they come unto me.
> To them I pipe on my pipe
> and beat on my drum, leading them to the Water.
> I call to them: "My little sheep, little sheep, come!

Rise up at my call! Come, rise at my call,
then will you escape the cloud-dragons.
Come, come unto me!"
Mandaean John-Book, JMM p.43; cf. GJB p.82, JM p.48

Finally, in an interesting switch of metaphors, the shepherd conveys those sheep who listen to his divine "Voice" to eternity – in a boat! –

I am a shepherd whose boat is soon coming:
my boat of glory is coming;
And I come with it,
and take my sheep and lambs on board.
Everyone who gives ear to my Call,
and pays heed to my Voice,
and who turns his gaze towards me,
I take hold of him with my hands,
and bring him aboard with me in my boat. . . .
He will come and mount up to the radiant dwelling,
to the region whose sun never sets,
and whose light-lamps never darken.
Mandaean John-Book, JMM pp.43, 45; cf. GJB pp.82–83, JM pp.48, 51

See also: **doorkeeper** (7.2), **Poimandrēs**, **sheep** (▸4), **shevet**.

1. *Jeremiah* 23:1*ff.,* 25:34–36, 50:6.
2. *Zechariah* 10:2–3, 11:3*ff.*
3. *Zechariah* 11:17, *JB.*
4. *Jeremiah* 23:5, *KJV.*
5. *Matthew* 10:6, *KJV.*
6. *Mark* 6:7–13.
7. *Luke* 9:1–6.
8. *Matthew* 6:22.
9. *Matthew* 7:13.
10. *Srōshāv* is derived from *Shraosha,* an Avestan term used by Zarathushtra for the Sound Current. Here, the master is identified with the Sound, and with God.

shevet (He) *Lit.* branch, staff, shoot, rod, sceptre; tribe; a secondary stem arising from the main trunk of a plant or tree; also, the sceptre or ceremonial staff of a king – the symbol of his authority; also, a shepherd's crook or staff; metaphorically, either the *Torah* (teachings), the divine creative power, or a prophet or messiah. All three are symbolized by the support given by the king's *shevet.*

Biblical texts commonly depict God as the king, with the king's *shevet* or ceremonial staff as a symbol of His power and authority. The *shevet* symbolizes the *Torah* in the sense that spiritual and religious teachings are a support to leading a good and spiritual life. It can represent the divine creative power or divine Name because it is this power upon which creation is founded, and it is the divinity immanent in creation. And it can be a true prophet or messiah because he draws his inspiration from this immanent power, and is thereby invested with divine power and authority.

In a further dimension to the imagery, the *shevet* is also understood as a branch of the Tree of Life *('Eẓ Ḥayyim).* The Tree of Life is itself variously understood as God Himself, as His creative power (with its 'roots' sustained by the flowing divine current from the Waters of Immortality), as a prophet or messiah, or – especially in Jewish prayers – as the *Torah.* The actual metaphorical meaning of *shevet* in any particular instance therefore depends upon the context.

The use of these metaphors in biblical texts is fluid. The king-messiah, for instance, is sometimes understood as a branch from the Tree of Life, sometimes as possessing such a branch as his sceptre, as the emblem of his power. In biblical and allied literature, "these two conceptions . . . are constantly alternating, seemingly without any difficulty felt."[1]

The *shevet* is a part of a family of Middle Eastern metaphors that includes the shepherd (God or a spiritual master), the sheep (the community of disciples), the wilderness or forest (this world), and so on. This metaphorical use is evident in a well-known passage in the twenty-third psalm, which is drawn from the experience of a shepherd who wanders alone with his sheep, having only his rod or staff to lean on:

> Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
> I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
> Thy rod *(shevet)* and Thy staff *(mish'an),*
> they comfort me.
>
> *Psalms 23:4, KJV*

In this context, since the *shevet* is said to belong to God, it probably refers to the divine creative power. A branch has the character of the tree from which it comes. So the *shevet* is probably intended to be understood symbolically as a shoot from the Tree of Life, with all its various possible connotations. The staff *(mish'an)* likewise represents divine support, provided through the prophet, the *Torah,* or the divine power.

In *Micah* (C8th BCE), the prophet implores God to look with kindness upon the children of Israel. The *shevet* is depicted as God's instrument – leading the people to pasture, to sustenance, and away from the uninhabited forest, where they are without divine help. Here again, the *shevet* is probably

the divine creative power, which provides inner guidance, though it may also symbolize the longed-for messiah, a saviour whom God promises to send, out of His great affection for the people:

> Shepherd Your people with Your staff *(shevet),* the flock of Your heritage who dwell alone in the forest, in the midst of Carmel; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.
>
> *Micah 7:14, JCL*

Living in a forest while surrounded by the lush vegetation of Carmel is understood to depict the Jews who returned from Babylonian exile to live in Jerusalem. The prophet is urging them to move back into the country, and to return to their traditional, pastoral way of life.

Since the prophet draws his authority from God Himself, *shevet* often refers to the sceptre that symbolizes royal authority. In one of the psalms, the psalmist addresses the messiah or prophet as a spiritual king, who has been anointed by God and has received His authority:

> My heart overflows with a noble theme;
> I address my verses to the king;
> My tongue as ready as the pen of a busy scribe.
>
> You are the fairest of the sons of men;
> Grace has been poured into your lips:
> therefore God has blessed you for ever. . . .
>
> Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever:
> the sceptre *(shevet)* of Your kingdom is a sceptre *(shevet)* of integrity.
>
> You love virtue and hate wickedness:
> therefore God, your God, has anointed you
> with the oil of gladness, above your fellows.
>
> *Psalms 45:1–2, 7–8; cf. JB, JCL, KJV*

The psalmist is saying that God's 'throne', which symbolizes His dominion over creation, will last forever through the agency of the messiah, who is God's sceptre *(shevet)* – the instrument through which He wields power in the material world. Since the bodily king or messiah cannot live forever, the psalmist must be pointing to the source of the messiah's power and authority – the divine Name, which is truly eternal and permanent.

A passage in *Ezekiel* takes the imagery of the *shevet* in a different direction. He speaks of the sceptre as a branch from the vine of the immanent divine power:

Your mother was like a vine planted beside the water,
fruitful and leafy, because of the abundance of water.
It put out strong branches *(mateh)* that turned to royal sceptres *(shevet):*
they reached up, reached so high they touched the clouds;
Men admired them for their height and their thick foliage.

But it was rooted up and thrown on the ground:
the east wind dried up its fruit;
It was broken up, and its strong branches *(mateh)* withered away:
fire consumed it all.

Now it has been transplanted into the desert,
to a dry and thirsty land;
Fire has burst out of its stem *(mateh),*
consumed its fruit and branches.
No more strong branch *(mateh)* for her
to be a kingly sceptre *(shevet).*

Ezekiel 19:10–14; cf. JB, JCL, NJB

In this unusual parable, Ezekiel is speaking to the Israelites during the time of their Babylonian exile (C6th BCE). He imagines their origins ("your mother") as a huge "vine" that put out many branches because it was planted in a fertile and well-watered place. The branches symbolize the people of Israel, who comprised twelve tribes. At one time the vine had strong branches, which became royal sceptres – signifying the strong spiritual leadership provided by these branches. There is a wordplay here, because *shevet* also means 'tribe'. But now that they are in exile, there is no strength left in the branches to provide a king-messiah. The branches have withered, *i.e.* ten of the twelve tribes have been driven into exile. If a spiritual level of meaning is also intended, it is that the divine Name or power that had coursed through the vine and had given her branches spiritual life, has dried up. The prophets who had guided them are no longer present.

In *Genesis,* it is predicted that "the sceptre *(shevet)* shall not depart from Judah, nor the staff from between his feet, until Shiloh ('Tranquillity') comes; and to him shall the obedience of the people be."[2] Judah was one of the leading tribes of Israel, and the name also became an epithet for all the Israelites collectively. King David was of the tribe of Judah, and it was believed that Israelite kings, as well as the messiah, would come from the house of David and hence from the tribe of Judah. Shiloh is interpreted as both the messiah who will come at the end of time, and also as the divine and comforting peace that he will bring. The provenance of *Genesis* is a matter of uncertainty, but according to some scholarly opinion, parts of it were written both before, during, and after the Babylonian exile, beginning about 900 BCE or even earlier

(no doubt based upon even earlier materials), through to about the fifth century BCE. If that is so, the prophecy is trying to reassure the Israelites, or perhaps to remind them of the tradition that despite their exile there will always be a messianic figure, a saviour or a king-messiah of the lineage of King David.

The Babylonian exile and its consequent suffering were responsible for a considerable wealth of biblical literature. Many of the psalms also brought messages of comfort to a people in exile, who were facing a future of foreign domination. They brought the hope that a divinely mandated, anointed leadership would be restored, probably from the lineage of King David, "a sprout *(ḥoter)* out of the stock of Jesse (David's father)."[3] There are a number of passages in the prophetic literature referring to such an individual, a king who would be called *mashi´aḥ* (anointed one). Over time, it seems that *shevet* became an epithet of the messiah, as the one who would restore Israel to its rightful place as God's chosen nation:

> Part of the reason (that the *shevet* is identified with the messiah) is that another passage (in *Numbers*), one that also seems to predict the coming of such a king, likewise uses the term 'sceptre': "A star will proceed from Jacob, and a sceptre *(shevet)* shall rise from Israel."[4] Surely this was no coincidence. If both this verse and Jacob's blessing refer to this future individual as a sceptre, it must be that 'sceptre' is the messiah's official title or nickname.
>
> *James Kugel, Traditions of the Bible, TBJK p.471*

It is no surprise, therefore, that in eighteenth-century Hasidism, the *rebbe* or *ẓaddik* was again symbolized by the shepherd's crook or staff *(shevet).* He was also believed to carry a messianic mission to his flock. He was likened to the Tree of Life, with its roots in heaven and its branches on earth. The shepherd's crook is used by the shepherd to guide straying sheep back to the fold, just as a spiritual master gives direction to errant human beings.

See also: **mateh** (7.3), **mishʿan** (▸4), **Tree of Life** (3.1), **ẓemaḥ ẓedek**.

1. Geo Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life, KTL* p.57.
2. *Genesis* 49:10; *cf. JCL.*
3. *Isaiah* 11:1, *KB.*
4. *Numbers* 24:17.

shī, **shīfu**, **lǎoshī**, **zǔshī** (C) *Lit.* a teacher, a master; an expert, an adept. In Daoism, *shī* refers to a teacher or master, while *shīfu* is used as a title of address for one's own master. The term in Cantonese is *sīfu.*

Daoist sages of all times have emphasized the need for a living *shī,* pointing

out that students cannot successfully pursue the spiritual path by studying the writings of deceased teachers. In Daoism, as in many spiritual paths, it is common knowledge that a seeker's best chance of success lies in finding a *shī* who can provide the proper instructions:

> Though the supreme *Dào* has no location,
> still it is necessary that an adept *(shī)* transmit guidelines.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, TCC2 p.439*

It is essential to find a *shī* who has perfected the art and science of the very spirituality that the student is seeking to learn:

> The ability of the enlightened ones (*shèng shī,* sage-teachers) of all times to shed the mundane (*tuōtāi,* become bodiless), become spiritually transformed *(shénhuà),* and adapt to changes endlessly, comes from their having purified *(jìng jié)* themselves beforehand; thus, at the end, they rose lightly *(jǔ qīng).*
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, BBH p.72*

However, the quest for a genuine *shī* is not always easy:

> Beginners *(chū)* don't know how to orient their efforts, and true guides *(zhēn shī)* in this quest are hard to find.
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, TCC2 p.511*

Seekers who are unsuccessful in finding an enlightened *shī* run the risk of passing their lives without seeming to have achieved anything spiritually:

> Beginners *(chūjí),* who do not seek teachers *(shī),*
> grow old without attainment *(wúchéng)* –
> Bringing misery *(kǔ)* upon themselves.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, TCC2 p.440*

A *shī* can only teach a student up to the level he himself has reached. Therefore, it is advisable for a seeker to conduct a thorough research, in order to avoid the byways of spirituality:

> When I first met my teacher *(zǔshī)* long ago, I asked for instruction on learning immortality *(chángshēng).* My teacher *(zǔshī)* said that learning immortality may be artificial *(wěi)* or real *(zhēn):* the artificial is the way of the methodologists *(fāngshì),* while the real is the way of the wayfarers *(dàoshì).*
>
> *Yáng Dàoshēng, Zhēnquán, PTTC p.2*

The term *zǔshī,* as used here, is usually applied to the founder of a school of learning, or to the founder of a school or sect in either Daoism or Buddhism, the prefix *zǔ* meaning ancestor or forefather.

Even if a seeker is intelligent, it is unwise for him to try to attain spiritual illumination by "guesswork"; success can only come after directly receiving appropriate instruction from a genuine *shī:*

> Even if you are intellectually bright, if you have not met a real teacher *(zhēn shī),* do not indulge in guesswork *(cāi).* As long as you do not have personal instruction in the gold elixir *(jīndān),* where can you learn to form the spiritual embryo *(líng tāi)?*
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, URC p.117*

The *Zhuāngzǐ* (C4th BCE) tells the story of the seeker Yìérzǐ, who had traversed remote mountains in search of the adept Xǔyóu, whom he wished to consult concerning the *Dào.* Yìérzǐ probably wanted Xǔyóu to accept him as a student and become his *shī.* But Xǔyóu, in his humility and gratitude, speaks of the *Dào* as his master, implying that the (living) *Dào* itself is the teacher one should seek:

> O my master *(shī)!* O my master *(shī)!* He gives to all things their blended qualities, and does not count it any righteousness. His favours reach to all generations, and He does not count it any benevolence. He is more ancient than the highest antiquity, and does not count himself old. He overspreads heaven and supports the earth. He carves and fashions all bodily forms, and does not consider it any act of skill – this is He in whom I find my enjoyment.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6, TT1 p.256*

The "blended qualities" are the infinite unique combinations of *yīn, yáng* (positive and negative) and the five 'elements' *(wǔxíng),* symbolically represented by earth, fire, water, wood and metal, which according to ancient Chinese philosophy comprise everything in existence, living and nonliving. Xǔyóu is saying that the real master is the *Dào,* with all its myriad manifestations.

See also: **míngshī**, **zǔ**.

shíbā āluóhàn, **shíbā luóhàn** (C) *Lit.* eighteen *(shíbā)* worthy ones *(āluóhàn);* the eighteen legendary *arhats* or enlightened beings in Buddhism. See **shoḍasha sthavirāḥ**.

shīr (P) (pl. *shīrān*) *Lit.* lion; metaphorically, an emblem of majesty, royalty, and power; hence, a mystic, a saint; also as *shīr-mard* (lion-man), implying a brave man, a hero, a champion, a conqueror; thus, in a mystical context, saints, who have conquered their lower selves; also, as *asad Allāh* (lion of God), an epithet given by Muḥammad to his cousin and son-in-law ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, but also used for saints. In the Persian script, *shīr* (lion) is identical to *shīr* (milk). The two words were previously pronounced differently, like the 'wind' that blows or to 'wind' up a clock. Nowadays, the two words are pronounced the same, except by Indians, who pronounce the word for lion as *sher.*

Rūmī is fond of 'lion' imagery, using it in a variety of contexts. In their spiritual essence, he says, all perfect saints are one:

> The souls of wolves and dogs are separate, every one;
> The souls of the lions of God *(shīrān-i Khudā)* are united. . . .
> When the (bodily) houses have no foundation remaining,
> the faithful remain one soul.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:414, 418; cf. MJR4 p.295*

These lions are denizens of the "jungle" of human "hearts". They are familiar with all the 'animals' that live there, and their dispositions:

> The being of man is a jungle:
> be on your guard against this being,
> if you are of the (divine) Breath.
> In our being, there are thousands of wolves and hogs:
> godly and ungodly, fair and foul. . . .
> But within that marvellous jungle,
> with which every lion *(shīr)* is familiar,
> there is a hidden way to hearts that seek.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:1416–17, 27; cf. MJR2 p.294*

No secrets can be kept from these spiritual lions – the *shaykhs* (masters) or *ṣāḥib-dilān* (men of heart, mystics):

> The *shaykh* (master) is as the lion *(shīr),*
> and hearts are his jungle.
> He enters hearts as readily as hope and fear:
> the secrets of the world are not hid from him.
> Keep watch over your hearts, O fruitless ones,
> in the presence of the majesty of the men of heart *(ṣāḥib-dilān).*
> External respect is given to the men of body *(ahl-i tan),*
> for God veils from them what is hidden.

Inward respect is given to the men of heart *(ahl-i dil),*
because their hearts have insight into secret thoughts.
Rūmī, Maśnavī II:3216–20; cf. MJR2 p.388

Rūmī also observes that saints should not be judged by external appearances. Outwardly, they may appear like normal human beings, but internally they are one with God. The words '*shīr* (lion)' and '*shīr* (milk)' are the same in appearance, yet their meaning or reality is entirely different:

Do not measure the actions of holy men *(pākān)* by yourself,
though *shīr* (lion) and *shīr* (milk) are written the same.
On this account, the whole world has gone astray:
scarcely anyone is aware of God's *abdāl* (saints).
They set up a claim of equality with the prophets *(anbiyā'):*
they supposed the saints *(awliyā')* to be like themselves.
"Behold," they said, "we are human, they are human:
both we and they are in bondage to sleep and food."
In their blindness, they do not perceive
that there is an infinite difference between them.
Rūmī, Maśnavī I:263–67; cf. MJR2 p.18

The human body is made of matter and is sustained by matter. To follow the "track of the lions" (the path of the saints), says Rūmī, requires rising completely above the body:

Bread and meat are of clay: eat little thereof,
that you may not remain in the earth, like clay.
When you become hungry, you become a dog:
you become fierce and ill-tempered and ill-natured.
When you have eaten your fill, you become a carcass:
you become devoid of understanding
and without feet (inert), like a wall.
At one time you are a carcass and at another time a dog:
how can you follow the track of the lions *(shīrān)?*
Rūmī, Maśnavī I:2872–75; cf. MJR2 p.157

shoḍasha sthavirāḥ (S), **shíbā āluóhàn**, **shíbā luóhàn** (C), **jūroku rakan** (J), **gnas brtan bcu drug** (T) *Lit.* sixteen *(shoḍasha, jūroku, bcu drug) arhats (āluóhàn, rakan)* or elders *(sthavirāḥ, gnas brtan),* an *arhat* being an enlightened being in Buddhism; the eighteen *(shíbā) arhats (āluóhàn).*

The sixteen legendary *arhats* of Indian, Tibetan and Japanese (especially *Zen*) Buddhism and the sixteen (later eighteen) *luóhàn* of the Chinese

Mahāyāna tradition are understood to be *bodhisattvas* who were once original followers of the Buddha. Having attained liberation at the time of the Buddha's passing into final *nirvāṇa (parinirvāṇa),* they were charged with protecting the *Dharma* until the arrival of Maitreya, regarded as the next Buddha to incarnate on earth, some time in the distant future. Although they were forest-dwelling renunciates *(araṇyavāsins),* they were asked to be available to the Buddhist laity so that the faithful could acquire merit through the presentation of offerings. Tradition has it that in order to fulfil the Buddha's request, they use supernatural powers in order to prolong their lives indefinitely, and that they can still be contacted in time of need. Even in present times, images of the sixteen *rakans* are found in Japanese temples, to which offerings are made.

According to Indian tradition, there were originally only ten *arhats* among the Buddha's disciples, of whom four were given instructions to await the coming of Maitreya,[1] but various patriarchs and adepts were later added to the list, making sixteen. The legend made its way to China, where early representations of the *luóhàn* date back to the fourth century (CE).[2] However, they remained without any names until 654 CE, when the *Nandimitrāvadāna* ('Record on the Duration of the *Dharma*') was translated into Chinese.[3]

During the late *Táng* dynasty and early Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period, two more *luóhàn* were added to this pantheon.[4] During the ninth century, the popularity of the *luóhàn* as protectors of the faith had gained ground as a result of severe persecution under the rule of the Emperor Wǔzōng (*r.*840–846), and the two later *luóhàn* – Taming Dragon and Taming Tiger – were added as guardians against imperial might.

In early Chinese portrayals, the *luóhàn* had no distinguishing features to differentiate one from the other.[5] According to legend, the first paintings of the eighteen were made in 891 by the artist-monk Guànxiū, to whom the *luóhàn* appeared in a dream, requesting that he paint their portraits. This gave each of them a graphic identity.[6] In translation, their names were Deer Sitting, Happy, Raised Bowl, Raised Pagoda, Meditating, Overseas, Elephant Riding, Laughing Lion, Open Heart, Raised Hand, Thinking, Scratched Ear, Calico Bag, Plantain, Long Eyebrow, Doorman, Taming Dragon and Taming Tiger, the names relating to their attributes, legendary deeds, postures, and so on. Guànxiū donated the paintings to the Shèngyīn monastery and temple in Qiántáng (now Hangzhou), where they are still carefully and reverentially preserved.[7] Regarded as definitive portraits, later artists have reproduced and added their own interpretations of the originals.[8] Painted in the traditional Far Eastern style, in vibrant colours and full of symbolic representations, they exhibit the *arhats* in an exotic manner.

In 1757, the Shèngyīn monastery was visited by the Emperor Qiánlóng. A votary of the *luóhàn,* the Emperor wrote a brief eulogy to each, which he presented to the monastery. In 1764, he ordered that the paintings, together

with his eulogies, should be preserved as engravings on stone tablets. His foresight was fortuitous, for the temple was destroyed during the Tàipíng rebellion, but ink rubbings of the engravings have survived both inside and outside of the country. The eulogies have a descriptive charm about them. Here, the eighteen verses follow the traditional order, as listed above:

Sitting dignified on a deer,
as if in deep thought;
With perfect composure,
contented with being above worldly pursuits.

Decimating the demons,
the universe now cleared;
Hands raised for jubilation,
wild with joy.

In majestic grandeur,
joy descends from heaven;
Raised the bowl to receive happiness,
glowing with jubilance and exultation.

A seven-storey pagoda,
miraculous power of the Buddha;
Forceful without being angry,
with pre-eminent Buddhist might.

Quietly cultivating the mind,
a countenance calm and composed;
Serene and dignified,
to enter the western paradise.

Bearing the *sūtras,*
sail east to spread the word;
Climbing mountains and fording streams,
for the deliverance of humanity.

Riding an elephant with a dignified air,
chanting aloud the *sūtras;*
With a heart for humanity,
eyes scanning the four corners of the universe.

Playful and free of inhibitions,
the lion cub leaps with joy;

Easily alternating tension with relaxation,
rejoicing with all living things.

Open the heart and there is Buddha,
each displaying his prowess;
The two should not compete,
for Buddha's power is boundless.

Easy and comfortable,
yawning and stretching;
In a state of omniscience,
contented with his lot.

Pondering and meditating,
understanding it all;
Above this world and free from conventions,
compassion conveyed up to the ninth heaven.

Leisurely and contented,
happy and knowledgable;
Full of wit and humour,
exuberant with interest.

Buddha of infinite life,
valuable bag containing secrets of heaven and earth;
Happy and contented,
cheerful and joyful is he.

Carefree and leisurely,
disdainfully regards the great void;
With celestial airs and religious spirit,
transcending this mortal world.

Compassionate elder,
a monk who has attained enlightenment;
Perceptive of the infinite universe,
with tacit understanding.

Powerful, husky and tough,
watching with careful alertness;
With the Buddhist staff in hand,
valiantly annihilates the evil.

In the hands are the spiritual pearl and the holy bowl,
endowed with power that knows no bounds;
Full of valour, vigour and awe-inspiring dignity,
to succeed in vanquishing the ferocious dragon.

Precious ring with magical powers,
infinitely resourceful;
Vigorous and powerful,
subduing a ferocious tiger.

Emperor Qiánlóng, Eulogies to the Eighteen Luóhàns, LABN

See also: **arhat**.

1. M.V. de Visser, *The Arhats in China and Japan, ACJV* p.62.
2. Patricia Welch, *Chinese Art: A Guide to Motifs and Visual Imagery, CAMI* p.197.
3. John Strong, *Relics of the Buddha, RBJS* p.226.
4. Patricia Karetzky, *Court Art of the Tang, CATK* p.128.
5. M. Watanabe, "Guanxiu and Exotic Imagery in Rakan Paintings," *GEIR* pp.34–42.
6. R. Bates, *10,000 Chinese Numbers, CNRB* p.256.
7. Susan Bush and Ilsio-yen Shih, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting, ECTP* p.314.
8. See also "Eighteen Arhats," *Wikipedia,* ret. March 2013; T. Watters, "The Eighteen Lohan of Chinese Buddhist Temples," *ELCT* pp.329–47.

shraddhānusārin, **shraddhānusārī** (S), **saddhānusārin**, **saddhānusārī** (Pa) *Lit.* faith *(shraddhā)* follower *(anusārī);* faith-devotee; the last and lowest in a sevenfold classification of noble disciples (S. *ārya-pudgala,* Pa. *ariya-puggala*); one in whom faith is the dominant characteristic; one who progresses by the driving force of faith, attained through the contemplation of impermanence *(aniccānupassanā),* which is the first among eighteen main forms of insight awareness *(vipassanā);* more commonly found in its Pali than its Sanskrit form. See **dharmānusārin**.

shramaṇa (S), **samaṇa** (Pa), **shāmén** (C), **shamon** (J) *Lit.* labouring, toiling, striving, making an effort; one who strives or makes an effort; one who makes an effort to do good and to refrain from evil; one who practises austerities, or a spiritual or religious discipline; a spiritual labourer, an ascetic, a holy man, a monk, a contemplative, a religious mendicant, a recluse; a heterodox ascetic; a generic term for members of the various non-Vedic and non-brahmanical religions and spiritual groups that existed in North India in

ancient times; from the Sanskrit *shram* (to make an effort, to exert oneself, to labour, to strive). Although the Pali *samaṇa* is generally acknowledged as being derived from the Sanskrit, being changed in the same manner as many other Pali words, it is sometimes maintained that *samaṇa* is derived from the Pali *sama* (tranquillity, calmness, serenity). The Japanese and Chinese terms, which are phonetic renderings of the Sanskrit, are used specifically for Buddhist monks and nuns.

Although no pre-Buddhist literature regarding the *shramaṇa* tradition has survived, it is clear from Buddhist texts that *shramaṇas* of several schools were already a significant part of the religious and spiritual landscape in the time of the Buddha and his probable contemporary Mahāvīra – the twenty-fourth Jain *Tīrthankara* (the last in the present cycle), who lived sometime during the sixth to fourth centuries BCE. The meaning of *shramaṇa* seems to have been more generic than specific, and both the Buddha and Mahāvīra, as well as many other Jain sages, were known by the title *Shramaṇa,* as were their followers. In the Pali texts, the Buddha is often addressed as Samaṇa Gotama, and it was to become a *shramaṇa* that the Buddha gave up a life of protected luxury in his father's palace in search of enlightenment. There are also many places in the Pali literature where the Buddha is said to enter into discussion with *shramaṇas,* either in groups or individually.

The *shramaṇa* tradition seems to have originated in pre-Vedic, pre-Aryan religion, and is notable for its acceptance of the related doctrines of trans-migration *(saṃsāra)* and liberation *(moksha)* therefrom by means of spiritual practice. In scholarly circles, they are therefore regarded as the forerunners of Buddhism, Jainism, and *yoga,* for which spiritual enlightenment and liberation from birth and death remain the primary goal. In a more universal sense, it may be said that they represented the Indian expression at that time of the inherent human desire for spiritual freedom and understanding.

Although *shramaṇas* were often depicted as ascetics, *shramaṇa* was actually an umbrella name for a diversity of groups, covering a number of different sub-traditions who deferred to no scriptural authority. Preceding and contemporaneous with the Buddhists and Jains (known to Buddhists as *Nirgranthas*), there were the *Ājīvikas,* and a number of other schools, not all of which were founded on spiritual principles. Some were entirely materialistic and hedonist in outlook; some were intellectual, basing their beliefs on analysis and reason; others were contemplative, seeking enlightenment through direct spiritual experience in meditation.

According to a traditional Sanskrit definition of a *shramaṇa: "Shramati tapasyatīti shramaṇaḥ* – a *shramaṇa* is one who exerts himself and performs austerities *(tapas)."* Many *shramaṇas* were undoubtedly ascetics, living as itinerant mendicants, some in groups, some solitary, some preaching, some engaging in debate, some adopting regimes of extreme austerity as a part of the means to spiritual enlightenment.[1] It was as a response to the prevalence

of such extremes that the Buddha famously taught the Middle Way – a balanced approach to spiritual life.

Rejecting the religion of the *Vedas,* and with origins preceding it, the *shramaṇas* were in conflict with the upholders of the ritualistic Vedic tradition, the *brāhmaṇs.* The principle of *ahiṃsā* (non-injury), for example, in keeping with an understanding of *karma* and transmigration, would not have sat comfortably with Vedic animal sacrifice. With the passage of time, however, as the two cultures converged and merged, *shramaṇa* beliefs and practices found their way into Vedic religion and *vice versa.* The *shramaṇa* is thus seen as antecedent to the renunciate *(sannyāsin)* who has entered the fourth phase of the life of a twice-born Hindu, while the early *Upanishads* represent the first flowering in literature of the fusion of the two cultures.

Shramaṇas are mentioned specifically in only two places in Vedic texts. There is a passing mention in the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad,* where – significantly – *shramaṇas* are linked to *tāpasas,* practitioners of *tapas* (austerity, discipline).[2] The other mention is in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka,* where *shramaṇa* is again used to mean an ascetic.[3]

Shramaṇas (Pa. *samaṇa*) appear frequently in Buddhist literature, especially in Pali texts. The Buddha's dialogues with the *samaṇas,* however, as generally represented in Buddhist texts, often come across as polemic, designed to point out the superiority of the Buddha's wisdom and teachings. They can hardly be regarded as a fair representation of the various *samaṇa* doctrines, and may in fact be considerably adrift from the reality:

> There are some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* . . . who lay emphasis on emancipation *(vimutti).* They speak, in various ways, in praise of emancipation, but as regards the really noblest, the highest emancipation, I am aware of no one else who is equal to myself, much less superior. And it is I who have gone the furthest therein; that is, in the most complete emancipation.
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 8, Kassapa-Sīhanāda Sutta, PTSD1 p.174; cf. DBRD p.238*

In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta,* also in the *Dīgha Nikāya,* the Buddha answers a question posed to him by King Ajātasattu about the benefits of the *samaṇa* way of life. *Sāmaññaphala* means the fruit *(phala)* of being a *samaṇa,* or more generally, the fruits of a holy, spiritual, or contemplative life. The king has already put the same question to six other spiritual teachers and has received no satisfactory answer. Employing 'skilful means' and a series of counter-questions and similes, the Buddha convincingly explains the true benefits of a contemplative life, the life of a *samaṇa.* In essence, the discourse is a presentation of the Buddha's teachings concerning virtue and morality, relinquishing the passions, control of the senses, mindfulness, contentment, attainment of the four *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption), higher insight

or wisdom, the attainment of supernormal powers, and the "ending of mental impurities *(āsavas)*".

The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* speaks in particular of six *samaṇa* leaders, though the sketchy account of their doctrines needs to be treated with some caution since it is evident that the authors had limited knowledge, and that the information they convey is distorted by their polemical approach. In a cordial manner, each of these teachers is first commended as well known, famous, the founder of an order, respected by many as a saint, a homeless wanderer of long standing, and advanced in years – and their viewpoints are then refuted. The *Majjhima Nikāya* also outlines the same doctrines, but does not associate them with particular individuals.[4] Briefly, these six leaders and their views are said to have been:[5]

1. Purāṇa Kassapa, who maintains that no account is kept of good and evil deeds, however good or bad they may be; life itself has no higher spiritual or religious purpose, and the way it is lived has no significance. Even were a man to torture others, to steal, to commit adultery, or even to kill all the living beings on earth and pile them up into one big heap, he would not be held accountable by any natural law. Likewise, if he were to travel the north and south banks of the Ganges, giving alms wherever he went, he would earn no reward. "In generosity, in self-mastery, in control of the senses, in speaking truth there is neither merit, nor increase of merit."

2. Makkhali Goshāla, who was the founder of the *Ājīvikas* and a contemporary of the Buddha and Mahāvīra. He expounded a philosophy that embraced the notions of fate *(niyati),* reincarnation, and the ideal of liberation and *nirvāṇa.* Likening life to a ball of string that, once thrown, unravels in a predetermined course until it reaches its end, he taught that a person's destiny is entirely preordained, controlled by fate without prior cause, and it therefore makes no difference whether a person behaves well or ill:

> There is no cause, either ultimate or remote, for the depravity of beings; they become depraved without reason and without cause. There is no cause, either proximate or remote, for the rectitude of beings; they become pure without reason and without cause. The attainment of any given condition, of any character, does not depend either on one's own acts, or on the acts of another, or on human effort.… All creatures…are without force and power and energy of their own. They are bent this way and that by their fate, by the necessary conditions of the class to which they belong, by their individual nature: and it is according to their position in one or other of the six classes (of living beings) that they experience ease or pain.
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 2, Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1 p.53; cf. DBRD p.71*

According to the *Bhagavati Sūtra* and Jain tradition, Goshāla was a close disciple and travelling companion of Mahāvīra for six years, before the two parted company after a disagreement. Goshāla went on to found the *Ājīvika* movement.

3. Ajita Kesakambalī, who held an entirely materialistic perspective, teaching that there is no life beyond death, no karmic accounting for deeds, no such thing as perfection and therefore no *shramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who have attained such a state and who are able to teach such wisdom to others. "A human being is comprised of the four elements, and when he dies, his earth returns to earth, his fluid to water, his heat to fire, his wind to air, and his faculties pass into space." In the various discourses ascribed to the Buddha, this viewpoint is often cited as an example of how an incorrect perspective can lead to a wrong course of action.

4. Pakudha Kaccāyana, who was also a materialist, teaching that human beings are comprised of seven basic elements (earth, water, fire, air, pleasure, pain, and soul) that disperse at death, at which point life and the sense of self are terminated. According to his doctrine, there is no cycle of birth and death, no law of *karma,* no power of fate or destiny, and no basis for morality. "When one with a sharp sword cleaves a head in twain, no one thereby deprives anyone of life; a sword has only penetrated into the interval between seven elementary substances." All of these four teachers maintained that there is no basis for moral accountability.

5. Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta, who refuses to be pinned down on any moral or philosophical issue on the basis that there is no means of verifying what is true and what is not. For this reason, he is described as an 'eel-wriggler':

> If you were to ask me whether there is another world – well, if I thought there were, I would say so. But I don't say so; and I don't think it is thus or thus; and I don't think it is otherwise; and I don't deny it; and I don't say that there neither is, nor is not, another world. And if you ask me . . . whether there is any fruit, any result, of good or bad actions; or whether a man who has won the truth continues, or not, after death – to each or any of these questions I would give the same reply.
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 2, Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1 p.58; cf. DBRD p.75*

King Ajātasattu has a poor impression of him: "Of all these *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs,* Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta is the most stupid and confused."[6] According to Buddhist texts, at least two of Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta's followers, Mahā Moggallāna and Sāriputta, ultimately left his tutelage, becoming among the foremost disciples of the Buddha, often mentioned in Buddhist literature.

6. Niganṭha Nātaputta, the Jain leader and twenty-fourth *Tīrthankara* Mahāvīra, who taught that the soul, which is responsible for its deeds in this world, is trapped in matter by karmic bonds, which can only be removed through austerities and self-mortification.

According to the narrative told in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta,* when King Ajātasattu expresses his desire to know something about spiritual matters, his six ministers, followers of the six heretical teachers, one after the other, suggest that the king should meet their particular *āchārya* and clear his doubts. Ajātasattu therefore pays each of them a visit, courteously asking the same question of each: "The fruits of various worldly trades and professions (which he lists) are obvious. But is it possible to show that any appreciable benefit can be derived from the life of a *samaṇa* in this very life?"[7]

The brief answers given by the six teachers fail to satisfy Ajātasattu. They are, says the king, as if someone had asked about mangoes and receives an answer concerning breadfruit, or when asked about breadfruit gets a reply concerning mangoes. It is then suggested to the king that he should put his questions to the Buddha. The Buddha answers by giving a long and detailed presentation of his teachings, with which the king is completely satisfied.[8]

How accurate the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta'*s description of the various philosophies may be is hard to say, especially since similar accounts appear in other places with some variations. The writer's intention was to present the Buddha's teachings as far superior to that of the other spiritual teachers of the time, and it is an obvious strategy to set up the 'competition' as easy targets, and then to knock them down systematically. The followers of one tradition are often poorly informed about the belief systems of others, and it is likely that the six views were assigned to the six protagonists without the writer really possessing a clear idea of what the other philosophies were about or being in a position to present them fairly. The 'discourse' would also have been written long after the death of both the Buddha and the six teachers, when the only record of their teachings was the sketchy and biased account preserved in Buddhist tradition.

Nonetheless, the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* and other discourses where the Buddha encounters those of contrary philosophical persuasions do demonstrate the diversity of philosophies that were housed under the *samaṇa* umbrella, and the tangled web of confusing and unverifiable doctrines that were present in the Buddha's time. In some respects, the Buddha agreed with the materialists that experience is of primary importance. But rather than limit that experience to the material realm, he pointed out that there are other realms of consciousness that can be experienced in this very life if one is prepared to apply the appropriate methodology, *i.e.* meditation, supported by a life of internal as well as external moral purity.

Other Buddhist texts present a variety of dialogues and discussions concerning the doctrines of the *samaṇas* and *brahmaṇs.* In the *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta*

of the *Dīgha Nikāya,* it is said that some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* maintain that, "The soul is perfectly happy and healthy after death." But the Buddha then takes their assertion apart by getting them to admit that they have never seen anyone in the world who is "perfectly happy", nor have they themselves been "perfectly happy for a whole night, or for a whole day, or even for half a night or day", nor do they know of a method by which such a state can be acquired, nor have they ever actually heard the voices of gods exhorting men to live good lives because that is how they (the gods) have been reborn after death in "a world of perfect happiness". Such assertions of the *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs,* continues the Buddha, are not founded upon personal experience. They are like a person who claims to love the "most beautiful woman in the land", but when he is questioned, it turns out that he knows absolutely nothing about her; or it is like a man who erects a staircase for his mansion at a crossroads so that others may presume that he has a mansion, but when asked the whereabouts of his mansion, he has no answer. Just so, the Buddha concludes, the *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* are making their assertions "without good ground".[9]

In the *Udāna,* the Buddha again speaks of the many and various beliefs of the *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs:*

> And on that occasion there were many *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* and wanderers of various sects living around Sāvatthī with differing views, differing opinions, differing beliefs, dependent for support on their differing views.
>
> Some of the *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* held this doctrine, this view: "The cosmos is eternal. Only this is true; anything otherwise is worthless." Some of the *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* held this doctrine, this view: "The cosmos is not eternal," . . . "the cosmos is finite," . . . "the cosmos is infinite," . . . "the soul is the same thing as the body," . . . "the soul is one thing and the body another," . . . "after death a *tathāgata* exists," . . . "after death a *tathāgata* does not exist," . . . "after death a *tathāgata* both exists and does not exist," . . . "after death a *tathāgata* neither exists nor does not exist. Only this is true; anything otherwise is worthless."
>
> And they kept on arguing, quarrelling, and disputing, wounding one another with weapons of the mouth, saying, "The *Dhamma* is like this, it's not like that. The *Dhamma* is not like that, it's like this."
>
> *Udāna 6, Tittha Sutta, PTSU pp.66–67; cf. KNTB*

The Buddha then relates his well-known story of the blind men and the elephant. Each gets hold of a different part of the beast, and proclaims with certainty that an elephant is "like a winnowing basket" (the ear), "like a ploughshare"

(a tusk), "like a broom" (the tail tuft), and so on. Following which, they all get into a fist fight. The Buddha therefore concludes that none of them really understand the *Dhamma* – the Way, the real teaching, the spiritual path:[10]

> In the same way, monks, the wanderers of other sects are blind and eyeless. They don't know what is beneficial and what is harmful. They don't know what is the *Dhamma* and what is non-*Dhamma.* Not knowing what is beneficial and what is harmful, not knowing what is *Dhamma* and what is non-*Dhamma,* they keep on arguing, quarrelling, and disputing, wounding one another with weapons of the mouth, saying, "The *Dhamma* is like this, it's not like that. The *Dhamma* is not like that, it's like this."
>
> *Udāna 6, Tittha Sutta, PTSU p.69; cf. KNTB*

In the *Sangārava Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya,* using the standard repetitive style of the Pali *suttas,* the Buddha categorizes the *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* according to their degree of faith and actual experience of what they are teaching:

> There is a diversity among those *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who claim to teach the fundamentals of the holy life after having reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge here and now. There are some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who are traditionalists *(anussavika)* who, on the basis of oral tradition, claim to teach the fundamentals of the holy life after having reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge here and now; such are the *brāhmaṇs* of the three *Vedas.*
>
> There are some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who, entirely on the basis of mere faith, claim *etc.*...; such are the reasoner-investigators *(takkī vīmaṃsī).*
>
> There are some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who, having directly known the *Dhamma* for themselves among things not heard before, claim *etc.*...
>
> I am one of those *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who, having directly known the *Dhamma* for themselves among things not heard before, claim to teach the fundamentals of the holy life after having reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge here and now.
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya 100, Sangārava Sutta, PTSM2 p.211; cf. MDBB p.820*

In the *Vinaya Piṭaka,* the Buddha observes that some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* are an altogether low kind of human being, who further ensnare people in the cycle of birth and death:

Stained by lust and malice, some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs,*
men blinded by ignorance, praise things that seem to give delight.
They drink strong drink, and fiercely indulge in sensual acts –
devoid of wisdom, they steal silver and gold,
and by other low arts do some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* live.

The Buddha of the solar race called such actions 'stains' –
stains by which some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* are defiled,
unclean and impure brutes, giving neither heat nor light.
Covered rather by darkness, purblind, enslaved by craving lusts,
they swell the population of the realm of death,
and then again fall prey to the horrors of another birth.

Vinaya Piṭaka 12:1.3; cf. VTP3 pp.389–90

But not all references to the *samaṇas* have a polemical tone. In the *Dhammapada,* possibly the earliest of Buddhist texts, *samaṇa* is used as a term for a Buddhist monk. Here, the Buddha simply points out what it really means to follow a spiritual life – to be a *samaṇa* – stressing repeatedly that the spiritual life is entirely inward. Outward forms, customs, appearances and practices do not constitute the holy life:

There are no footpaths in the sky,
there is no *samaṇa* outside (of us).…
Truly, he who harms others is no monk *(pabbajita),*
he who oppresses others is no *samaṇa.*…

Neither nakedness, nor matted hair, nor mud, nor fasting,
nor lying on the ground, nor dust, nor (rubbing with) ashes,
nor sitting motionless, can purify a mortal
who has not overcome doubt.

Though gaily dressed, if he lives with a serene mind, is calm,
controlled, has certainty, is perfectly pure,
and has ceased to injure all living beings –
He indeed is a *brāhmaṇ,* a *samaṇa,* a *bhikkhu.*

Not by a shaven head does an undisciplined man who utters lies
become a *samaṇa.*
How can one who is full of desire and greed be a *samaṇa?*
He who wholly subdues evil tendencies, great or small –
he can be called a *samaṇa,* because he has overcome all evil.

Dhammapada 18:20, 14:6, 10:13–14, 19:9–10; cf. DPN, DPR

In another verse, the Buddha says that it is not talking the talk that makes a difference, but walking the walk. Here, *sāmañña* literally means the state of a *samaṇa, i.e.* spiritual life:

> Though he recites a great many scriptures,
> but does not act accordingly –
> that heedless man is like a cowherd who counts others' cattle.
> He has no share in spiritual life *(sāmañña).*
>
> Though he recites only a few scriptures,
> but acts in accordance with the teaching,
> forsaking lust, hatred and ignorance,
> truly knowing, with mind well freed,
> clinging to nothing here and hereafter –
> He is one who shares in spiritual life *(sāmañña).*
>
> *Dhammapada 1:19–20; cf. DPN*

It is the way a person lives that makes all the difference:

> Because he has discarded evil, he can be called a *brāhmaṇ;*
> Because he lives in serenity, he can be called a *samaṇa;*
> Because he relinquishes his impurities, he can be called a *pabbajita.*
>
> *Dhammapada 26:6; cf. DPN, DPR*

In another early text, the *Sutta Nipāta,* the Buddha lists four kinds of *samaṇas,* where they are again treated as synonymous with *bhikkhus* (monks). The first kind is the awakened *magga-jina* (victor of the Way), one "who has overcome doubt, is without pain, delights in *nibbāna,* and is free from greed, a leader of the world of men and gods". Secondly, there is the *magga-desaka* (teacher of the Way), one "who in this world having known the best *(i.e. nibbāna)* as the best, who right here expounds and explains the *Dhamma.* He is the doubt-destroying *muni,* without desire." Then there is the *magga-jīvati* (one who lives the Way), "who lives by the well-taught principles of the Way, is mindful, restrained, cultivating blameless principles". Lastly, there is the disgraceful *magga-dūsin* (defiler of the Way), "who counterfeits the virtuous, is self-asserting, a corrupter of families, intrusive, deceitful, unrestrained, a babbler, going about in disguise".[11]

In the *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra,* the Buddha explains that the spiritually disciplined life of a *samaṇa* is no easy matter for an average human being or even for a monk. In an extensive description, he lays out what the characteristics of a *shramaṇa* should and should not be. His conclusion is that a true *shramaṇa* is one who follows the Buddhist way of life:

Then Mahākāshyapa asked the Buddha, "The World-Honoured One talks of *shramaṇas.* What makes a (true) *shramaṇa?*" The Buddha answered Kāshyapa,

"A *shramaṇa* is one who can:
attain *nirvāṇa,* control himself,
accept the teachings, observe the pure precepts,
enter and be still in the *dhyānas* (contemplations),
realize wisdom,
attain liberation by realizing the nature of Reality,...
persistently practise the four mindfulnesses,
avoid all unwholesome *dharmas.*...

"(A *shramaṇa* is one who) can achieve the five roots:
To have firm faith in the Buddha, the *Dharma,*
and the *sangha* (Buddhist community);
Not to believe in any doctrine other than the *buddhadharma;*
To strive to eradicate all impurities,
avoiding all unwholesome *dharmas,*
but cultivating all wholesome ones in accordance with the truth;
To know thoroughly the skilful means
of acquiring right knowledge and right mindfulness,
keeping exclusively wholesome *dharmas* in mind;
And to know well the skilful means
of attaining *dhyāna* and wisdom."[12]

Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 44, T11 310:638c15–25

And so the text continues, detailing many features of Buddhist doctrine, including the ability to

"...reach the last birth (before entering *nirvāṇa*),
reject the path of birth and death *(saṃsāra),*
relinquish all desire,...
reject all other teachings after taking refuge in the *buddhadharma.*"

Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 44, T11 310:639a2–4

The Buddha then adds, "Kāshyapa, if a person can follow these, then he is a true *shramaṇa,*"[13] going on to observe, however, that even a sincere *shramaṇa* is prone to many faults:

"Kāshyapa, the imperfections of a *shramaṇa* are of thirty-two kinds. One who has renounced household life should keep them at bay. What are these thirty-two?

"To feel desire,
to feel hatred,
to feel annoyance,
to praise oneself,
to demean others,
to seek dishonest material gains,
to seek profit for one's own benefit, . . .
to be always finding fault with others,
to be unable to see one's own faults."
Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 44, T11 310:639a29–b2, b8–9

And so on, concluding, "All these are the imperfections of a *shramaṇa.* If a *shramaṇa* can purify himself of these kinds of imperfection, he is a true *shramaṇa.*" Here, *shramaṇa* is being used as a term for a Buddhist monk, and the Buddha is listing what constitutes a good monk and a defective one. In another *sūtra* from the same text, the Buddha also points out, among other things, that simply wearing monastic robes does not make a monk. One who wears such robes, but is inwardly impure, is no true monk. There are, he adds, four kinds of *shramaṇa:*

"Shramaṇas who are so only in appearance and attire.
Shramaṇas who assume a deceptively dignified demeanour.
Shramaṇas who crave fame.
Shramaṇas who actually practise the *Dharma."*
Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 43, T11 310:636b1–2

After further elaboration concerning the good qualities of a true *shramaṇa,* he then concludes:

"And so, Kāshyapa, you should follow the example of the *shramaṇa* who really practises the *Dharma,* and do not be corrupted by status. Kāshyapa, suppose a poor and lowly man were to assume the name of a wealthy, noble person. Would that really be his name?"
Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 43, T11 310:636b28–c1

In Jainism, a *shramaṇa* is an ancient term for a monk, as opposed to a *shrāvaka* (layperson), a term used in Buddhism for a direct disciple of the Buddha. The related terms *samaṇ* and *samaṇī* were introduced in 1980 by the *Shvetāmbara Terāpanthī* sect (founded in 1760) for a class of novice monks and nuns who have taken only partial vows, are allowed to travel by mechanized transport, to go abroad, to eat food prepared for them, and to use money. Rather than wearing a cloth *(muhapatti)* over their mouth to prevent the ingestion and death of small creatures, they hold a cloth over their mouth while speaking.

A person can remain a *samaṇ* or *samaṇī* or, with the consent of their *āchārya,* become a full *sādhu* (monk) or *sādhvī* (nun).[14]

The *shramaṇa sangha* is the name of another twentieth-century innovation, founded in 1952 as a centrally organized *Sthānakavāsī* mendicant lineage, in the attempt to unite the many *Sthānakavāsī* subsects under one leading *āchārya,* and return to the ideals of their founder. But the venture has achieved only partial success, with some leading monks continuing to function independently and others re-establishing their own independence.[15] Founded in the seventeenth century by the merchant Lavajī, the *Sthānakavāsīs* reject temple and image worship on the grounds that such practices are not mentioned in their scriptures.

As in Buddhism, there are Jain texts that extol the virtues of the true *shramaṇa,* this time as a Jain monk. In the *Sūtrakṛitānga,* Prince Ārdraka (later a disciple of Mahāvīra) tells Makkhali Goshāla that a *shramaṇa* is one who teaches the correct Jain vows to monks and laity:

> Him I call a *shramaṇa* who teaches the great vows (*mahāvrata,* of monks) and the five small vows (*aṇuvrata,* of the laity), the five *āsravas* (inflows of *karma*) and the stoppage of the *āsravas,* and control (of the senses), and who avoids *karma* in a life that is blessed by being a *shramaṇa.*
>
> *Sūtrakṛitānga 2:6.6; cf. SBE45 p.410*

> He is called a *shramaṇa* because he is not hampered by any obstacles and is free from desires, possessions, causing injury, telling lies and sexual intercourse, and from wrath, pride, deceit, greed, love and hate. He thus relinquishes every passion that involves him in sin, such as the killing of beings. Such a man deserves the name of a *shramaṇa,* who subdues his senses, is adept, and abandons (concern for) his body.
>
> *Sūtrakṛitānga 1:16.3; cf. SBE45 p.333*

The *Āchārānga Sūtra* maintains that adherence to the primary Jain vows is the hallmark of a true monk *(shramaṇa):*

> "I shall become a *shramaṇa* who owns no house, no property, no sons, no cattle, who eats what others give him; I shall commit no sinful action; master, I renounce accepting anything that has not been given." Having taken such vows, (a *shramaṇa*) should not, on entering a village or free town, himself take, or induce others to take, or allow others to take, what has not been given.
>
> *Āchārānga Sūtra 2:7.1; cf. SBE22 p.171*

> Disregarding (all calamities), he lives together with discerning monks, insensitive to pleasure and pain, not hurting movable or immovable (beings), not killing, enduring all things: that is the description of the great sage, a good *shramaṇa.*
>
> *Āchārānga Sūtra 2:16.4; cf. SBE22 p.211*

In his *Pravachanasāra,* Āchārya Kundakunda maintains that a true *shramaṇa* attains serenity, free from the influence of external things, in a state of elevated consciousness. A *shramaṇa,* as a true Jain mendicant monk, also exhibits many other attributes that characterize Jain doctrine:

> That *shramaṇa,* who has correctly understood all things and the texts that explain them, who is endowed with self-control and penances, who is free from attachment, and to whom pleasure and pain are alike, is said to represent pure consciousness.
>
> He who has manifested pure consciousness and is free from obscuring, obstructive and deluding karmic matter, has become self sufficient, and fully comprehends the objects of knowledge.…
>
> He who has destroyed the knot of delusion, who has overcome attachment and aversion, and is indifferent to pleasure and pain in his condition of a *shramaṇa,* attains eternal happiness.…
>
> My salutation to that path leading to *nirvāṇa* and to those who, following it, attained the states of *shramaṇas,* of *Jinas,* of *Jinendras,* and of *siddhas* (perfected, liberated beings).…
>
> A *shramaṇa* does not entertain attachment either for food or fasting, for residence or wandering, or for paraphernalia, fellow monks, or unhealthy gossip.…
>
> He is *shramaṇa* who has no desires for this world and no attachment for the next, whose diet and wandering are properly conducted, and who is free from passions.…
>
> The *shramaṇa* possesses the body alone, and even towards the body he has no sense of mine-ness.…
>
> Enemies and family members, happiness and misery, praise and censure, a clod of earth and a lump of gold, even life and death, are all alike to the *shramaṇa.*
>
> *Kundakunda, Pravachanasāra 14–15, 195, 199, 215, 226, 228, 241; cf. PAKU*

See also: **parivrāja**, **vrātya**, **yati**.

1. *Majjhima Nikāya* 51, *Kandaraka Sutta, PTSM1* pp.342–43, *MDBB* pp.446–47.
2. *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* 4:3.22.
3. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* 2:7.1.

4. *Majjhima Nikāya* 60 *(Apaṇṇaka Sutta),* 76 *(Sandaka Sutta), PTSM1* pp.400*ff.,* 513*ff.*
5. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.52–59, *DBRD* pp.69–75.
6. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* p.59.
7. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* p.51; *cf. JBLB* p.9.
8. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.47–86.
9. *Dīgha Nikāya* 9, *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta, PTSD1* pp.192–94, *DBRD* pp.257–59.
10. *Udāna* 6, *Tittha Sutta, PTSU* pp.68–69, *KNTB.*
11. *Sutta Nipāta* 1:5, *Cunda Sutta* 1–8, *PTSN* pp.17–18; *cf. SNVF* p.15, *KNTB.*
12. *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra* 44; *cf. TMSC* p.281.
13. *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra* 44, *T11* 310:639a14–15.
14. See "samaṇ/samaṇī," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*
15. See "śramaṇa saṅgha," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*

shrāmaṇera (S) (fem. *shrāmaṇerī, shrāmaṇerikā*) *Lit.* small monk *(shramaṇa);* a novice Buddhist monk or nun, who has received the first of the two ordinations, which is known as *pravrajya,* and has vowed to observe the ten precepts:

1. Not to harm living beings.
2. Not to take what is not given.
3. Not to be unchaste.
4. Not to lie or speak ill.
5. Not to permit the mind to become clouded by intoxicants.
6. Not to sing, dance, play music, or attend entertainment programmes.
7. Not to wear perfume, cosmetics, ornaments, *etc.* to beautify the body.
8. Not to sit on raised chairs or to sleep on luxurious beds.
9. Not to eat at the wrong time (*i.e.* after midday).
10. Not to handle gold, silver, precious objects, or money.

See also: **pravrajya** (7.4).

shrī (S/H/Pu), **sri** (Pu) (fem. *shrīmati*) *Lit.* prosperity, good fortune, wealth; splendour, beauty, majesty; venerable one, eminent one; an honorific prefix used extensively for God *(e.g. Shrī Hari),* for deities *(e.g. Shrī Vishṇū),* for eminent, respected, venerated or even ordinary persons, as well as saints and holy men (*e.g.* Shri Ramakrishna), for celebrated sacred texts *(e.g. Shrī Bhagavad Gītā, Shrī Guru Granth Sāhib),* and so on; commonly used nowadays to mean Mr and Mrs *(Shrī* and *Shrīmati).*

The etymology of *shrī* as an epithet is possibly associated with the verb *shrī* (to burn, to diffuse light or radiance) – hence, the original meanings of *shrī* in the *Ṛig Veda* and other ancient Sanskrit literature, of light, lustre,

radiance, splendour, glory, beauty, grace, loveliness, and hence, wealth, prosperity, treasure, riches, good fortune, success, auspiciousness, majesty, power, royal dignity, high status, virtue, excellence, intelligence, super human power, fame, and glory.

Shrī is also used as an auspicious syllable, placed at the start or back of letters, manuscripts, and significant documents, as in *Shrī Aum, Aum* signifying God and *Shrī* betokening prosperity and good fortune. *Shrī* and *Aum* are the two syllables most commonly used for auspicious purposes. *Shrī* is also the name of the fifth of the six principle *rāgas* of Indian classical music, and is a name (also as *Shrī-devī*) given to *Lakshmī,* consort of *Vishṇu* and goddess of wealth, prosperity, and beauty.

shrīpūjya (S) *Lit.* revered *(shrī)* honourable man *(pūjya);* a leader of Jain *Shvetāmbara* temple-dwelling monks *(yatis),* largely of the past, who did not take the full mendicant vows, who owned property, and often lived in considerable style. See **chaityavāsin**.

shubān (P) *Lit.* shepherd; sometimes, colloquially, *shabān, chūpān,* and *chūbān;* metaphorically, God or the master, who watches over the soul. Thus, one of Rūmī's characters speaks of the ever-watchful care of the divine beloved:

> You thought me to be a lamb without a shepherd *(shubān),*
> you assumed that I have none keeping watch over me. . . .
> How should I be less than a lamb, less than a kid,
> that there should be no keeper *(ḥāris)* behind me?
> I have a keeper *(ḥāris)* who is pleased to be in charge:
> he knows the wind that blows upon me.
> Whether that wind is cold or hot,
> that knowing one is not unaware;
> He is not absent, O infirm man.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:228, 232–34; cf. MJR4 p.285*

Rūmī exhorts the soul to follow this master:

> Come! The king of kings beckons the falcon of the soul.
> Come! The shepherd *(chūbān)* drives the flock to pasture.
>
> *Rūmī, in Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 7:15, MASA2 p.801; cf. FKG p.559*

> Cease behaving like wolves and dogs,
> so that you may experience the shepherd's *(shubān)* love.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2577:27366, KSD5 p.280; cf. SDST (XLII) pp.168–69*

The archetypal enemy of sheep are wolves, who symbolize the senses, human weaknesses, and the attractions of the world. Rūmī says that any seeming harshness the shepherd might exhibit is for the disciple's benefit, which the disciple should not seek to avoid:

It is not right for sheep to run from the shepherd *(chūpān)*
towards the wolves, because of the rule of the shepherd *(chūpān).*
For this shepherd *(chūpān)* does not shed the blood of the sheep:
he knows how to rear them to eternal life.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1904:20039–40, KSD4 p.169; cf. MP2 (235:16–17) p.30

The world is no more than a man-eating wolf;
Why, O heart, do you run from the shepherd *(shubān)?*
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2750:29251, KSD6 p.85; cf. in SSE3 p.227

For the divine shepherd protects the sheep from the wolf:

When the shepherd *(chūpān)* has gone to sleep,
the wolf becomes unafraid:
For when he sleeps, his vigilance ceases;
But the animal whose shepherd *(chūpān)* is God –
how can the wolf have any hope or chance?
Rūmī, Maśnavī III:1193–94; cf. MJR4 p.68

Writing in praise of his master, Rūmī says that, although he may be surrounded by a multitude of problems and human weaknesses, the shepherd still makes liberation possible:

A Joseph alone, and a hundred wolves,
yet he escapes when you are shepherd *(shubān).*
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2756:29293, KSD6 p.87; cf. MP2 (352:4) p.112

Rūmī tells the story of the people of Sabā (people of the world), who continue to behave badly despite the admonishments of their "counsellors". Indeed, "they even tried to take the lives of their counsellors." They behave like sheep who are aware of the presence of the hunting wolf but do not try to get away. Though aware of its tribulations, they prefer life rather than trying to escape from it:

Sheep know the smell of the harmful wolf
and run away in every direction.
Animals' brains know the smell of a lion,
and bid farewell to grazing.

You have smelled the lion of (God's) wrath.
Turn back! Consort with prayer and fear (of God)! . . .

In wrath, the wolf tore to pieces those sheep
who shut their eyes to the shepherd *(chūpān),*
which is Wisdom *(Khirad).*
How often did the shepherd *(chūpān)* call them! –
and they came not.
They threw the dust of resentment
into the eyes of the shepherd *(chūpān),* saying,
"Begone: we ourselves
are better shepherds *(chūpān)* than you.
Why should we become your followers?
We are chieftains, every one (of us).
We are food for the wolf,
and we are not for the friend;
We are fuel for the fire,
we prefer damnation to rebuke."

Rūmī, Maśnavī III:387–94; cf. MJR4 pp.24–25

In another story, one of Rūmī's characters addresses his own "benefactor", comparing him to a shepherd who symbolizes the divine beloved. This divine shepherd spares no pains in caring for the sheep that goes astray. In Rūmī's story, Kalīm (interlocutor) or Kalīm Allāh is a Muslim epithet of Moses, meaning 'one who talks with God'.[1] The epithet comes from the biblical story of Moses' conversation with God, who – according to the story – appeared in an illuminated bush and spoke to the Hebrew prophet-to-be while he was tending the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law:[2]

"Every moment, you bestow a life that,
because of its preciousness, cannot be contained in words.
You bestow a life exceedingly enduring,
real gold coin exempt from depreciation, beyond valuation.
There exists no one sublime enough to inherit
even one noble trait of yours –
O you to whose abode heaven bows in worship.

"Your grace is the shepherd *(shubān)*
of every being in creation,
guarding them from the wolf of pain –
A loving shepherd *(shubān)* like God's Kalīm."

One sheep fled from God's Kalīm:
 Moses' feet became blistered following it,
 and his shoes dropped off.
He continued searching after it until nightfall,
 meanwhile the flock had vanished from his sight.
The lost sheep was weakened and exhausted by fatigue:
 then God's Kalīm shook the dust off it,
 and stroked its back and head with his hand,
 fondling it lovingly like a mother.
Not even half a hint of irritation and anger:
 nothing but love and pity and tears!
He said to the sheep,
"I understand that you had no pity on me,
 but why did your nature show such cruelty to itself?"
Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:3277–86; cf. MJR6 p.439

The term is also used as Shubān-i Vādī-yi Ayman ('Shepherd of Safe Valley') – another epithet of Moses. The Vādī-yi Ayman is the wilderness through which Moses led the children of Israel. According to a legendary extension of the biblical story,[3] partly retold in the *Qur'ān,*[4] Moses kills an Egyptian and flees to Maydan (Midian), where he spends ten years working for the righteous priest Shu'ayb (in *Exodus,* Jethro) as a dowry payment for the hand of Shu'ayb's daughter Ṣafūrā' (Zipporah). After he has completed his ten years' service, Moses is then commissioned by God as a prophet.

The story has been taken as an archetype for the life of every prophet, who must learn to serve others before beginning his ministry. Paraphrasing a *ḥadīth,* Rūmī writes:

Muḥammad himself has said that every prophet
 herded sheep as a young man or boy;
And that without his having been a shepherd *(shubān)*
 and having undergone that trial,
 God did not bestow on him the leadership of the world.
Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:3288–89, MJR6 p.440

The story is also taken in the sense that every disciple must learn to serve, and relinquish his ego, before he can expect to enter the inner sanctum and meet the mystic beloved:

The Shubān-i Vādī-yi Ayman
 will attain his desire when, in his soul,
 he spends some years in the service of Shu'ayb.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.109, DIH p.199; cf. DHWC (202:6) p.377

See also: **rā'ī**, **shepherd**.

1. *Exodus* 3–14, 16–17, 19–35, 40.
2. *Exodus* 3:1–22.
3. *Exodus* 2:11–25, 3:1.
4. *Qur'ān* 28:15–28.

Shvetāmbar(a) (S/H) *Lit.* white *(shveta)* clothing *(ambara);* white-robed; the name given to members of one of the two major divisions of Jainism, whose monks are characterized by their white apparel, the others being the *Digambaras* (clothed by the sky), whose monks (traditionally) remain naked. *Digambaras* are more rigorous in their beliefs and practices than the *Shvetāmbaras,* who are more accommodating to the practical needs of life. See **Digambara**.

sibyl (Gk. *sibylla*) Specifically, any of a number of women seers of ancient Greece and Rome, believed to be oracles and prophetesses; both historical and legendary, as for instance, the sibyl of Cumae (in Italy), guide to Aeneas in the underworld; by later extension, any witch, sorceress, or fortune-teller.

The sibyl is first mentioned by name in a Greek fragment of Heraclitus (C5th BCE), who writes of "the sibyl, with frenzied mouth uttering things solemn, unadorned and unlovely, yet with her voice reaching out over a thousand years with the help of the god within her".[1] However, "frenzied women from whose lips the god speaks" are mentioned far earlier in ancient Near Eastern literature from Assyria (now northern Iraq, northeast Syria, and southeastern Turkey) and Mari (now Tell Hariri in Syria), in the first and second millennia BCE, respectively.[2]

Traditionally, the sibyl was depicted as an ancient woman of the mythical past, who uttered raving and ecstatic prophecies in Greek hexameters, that were handed down in writing. According to Ovid, Apollo had granted her as many years as there are grains of sand on the seashore. But since she omitted to ask for eternal youth, she became a shrivelled and shrunken old woman, thousands of years old.

During the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, the sibyl appears to have been represented by a real person, located in Asia Minor, known by the name Sibylla. From the late fourth century, a number of sibyls appeared at all the well-known oracle centres and elsewhere, such as Erythrea and Marpessus in Asia Minor, Delphi in Greece, and Cumae in Italy. There were also Hebrew, Babylonian, and Egyptian sibyls. Since these seeresses were known by their individual names, 'sibyl' came into use as a title.

According to legend, the Cumaean sibyl offered to sell a nine-book collection of sibylline prophecies *(The Sibylline Books)* to Tarquinius Priscus (*fl.*

C6th BCE), the fifth of the seven kings of Rome. Without reading the books, Tarquinius declined the offer due to the high asking price, and because he regarded the sibyl as of no account. In a remarkable piece of salesmanship, the sibyl then burnt three of the books, followed by a further three. At this point, the king picked up the remaining three and started to read. Amazed at the contents, he bought them for the original asking price of all nine. Thereafter, the books were kept in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill, for consultation only in times of crisis. They were destroyed when the temple was burnt down in 83 BCE.

In later times, a collection of prophecies appeared *(The Sibylline Oracles),* written in Greek, with frequent eschatological and politico-historical references, in which Jewish and Christian doctrines appear to be confirmed by an unknown sibyl. This collection is generally regarded as the composite work of various Hellenistic Jewish and Christian writers between the mid-second century BCE and the seventh century CE, intended to promote Jewish and Christian belief in a Hellenistic world. Written after the event, the oracles set out to establish their reliability by 'predicting' the future. Scholars fix the date that such works were actually composed by determining the point at which the prophecies cease to be accurate. Jewish and early Christian writers, like Josephus, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and St Augustine, took the books to be genuine, and were greatly impressed at seeing their doctrines confirmed by an 'objective' witness, regarding the sibyl as no less inspired than the biblical prophets.[3]

See also: **clairvoyance** (7.3), **oracle**, **psychic experience** (7.3), **seer**, **soothsayer**, **visionary**.

1. Heraclitus, *Fragment* 79 (92), in Plutarch, *Life of Pythagoras* 6:379a.
2. Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion, GRAC* pp.116–18.
3. See "sibyl," "Sibylline Oracles," in *Encyclopædia Britannica* 2001; *Sibylline Oracles, Introduction, OTP1* pp.317–20.

siddh(a) (S/H), **siddhar** (Tamil) *Lit.* perfected, accomplished, realized, successful, completed, skilled, consummate; beatified, sacred, holy, divine, illustrious; proven (in logic); cooked (in food); valid (in law); prepared (in medicine); one who is accomplished, an adept; one who has attained his object; a perfected one, a liberated soul; a holy personage, a great saint; a practitioner of *tantra* who is successful in attaining the goal of meditation (perfection, liberation); in various traditions of the Indian subcontinent and Himalayas, an enlightened teacher or *guru;* one who has attained *siddhi* (perfection), which confers both enlightenment (*paramasiddhi, parasiddhi,* supreme perfection) and magical or supernatural power (*aparasiddhi,* lower or mundane attainment)

through various spiritual practices, including *kuṇḍalinī yoga, laya yoga,* and *haṭha yoga;* any great adept in magic or one who has acquired supernatural powers, usually in relation to tantric Buddhists and *Nāth* sects and orders;[1] in South India, where the Tamil Nadu *siddhar* tradition is prevalent, a general term for saint; in Tibetan Buddhism, a mystic adept, where the term *mahāsiddha* (great adept) is more often used; also, a class of divine or semi-divine beings.

Siddha has been used at different times from the fourth or fifth century onwards by many diverse groups and traditions of the subcontinent and the Himalayas, who have espoused varying doctrines and beliefs, and who have given various shades of meaning to the term. These have included Jainism, Buddhism, orthodox Brahmanical culture, and many of the *Shaiva* and *Shākta* traditions of Hinduism, particularly those with tantric roots.[2]

Siddha describes a condition of spiritual perfection rather than a doctrine, path, religion, or yogic practice. Writing as the divine Source, as the primal *Siddha,* the unknown author of the *Maitreya Upanishad* declares that the Divine is beyond all human differences:

> I am the Source (of all things). I am also the *guru* of all worlds. I am of all the worlds. I am He. I am Myself alone. I am *Siddha.* I am the Pure. I am the Supreme. I am. I am always He. I am the Eternal. I am stainless. I am the Excellent. . . . I am the All.
>
> *Maitreya Upanishad 3:1–3, TMU p.22*

Tulsīdās and other medieval and later *sants* have employed *siddha* as a general term for true holy men, using it more or less synonymously with *muni* and *ṛishi:*

> It is by the grace of the Name *(Nām)* alone that *siddhas, munis* and *yogīs* . . . enjoy divine raptures.
>
> *Tulsīdās, Rām Charit Mānas 1:25.1, RCML p.35*

> The *Vedas,* the *Tantras* and the *Purāṇas* are agreed, and so too do the *siddhas* and *munis* unequivocally declare, that the fellowship of genuine saints is only attained by those whom *Rām* regards with favour.
>
> *Tulsīdās, Rām Charit Mānas 7:68.3–4; cf. RCML p.1022*

Siddhas as Celestial Beings

The term has a long history of use. It is used in modern times, and also appears in both ancient and medieval literature, such as the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa,* and the *Purāṇas, Upanishads, Āgamas, tantras,* and yogic texts. In ancient times, *siddhas* were understood as a class of celestial beings or semi-divine 'perfected ones', said to be of great spiritual purity, who existed in a

state of supreme spiritual fulfilment or *siddha* (perfection). The *Mahābhārata* lists them along with several other classes of extraordinary beings:

> There dwell the celestials with *Brahmā* at their head, *ṛishis* endowed with the wealth of asceticism, the *siddhas,* the *chāraṇas,* the *gandharvas,* the *kinnaras,* and the serpents *(nāgas).*
>
> *Mahābhārata 3:84.5, MRS2 p.1193, MV2 (3.84) p.183*

In some accounts, the *siddhas* dwell in *bhuvarloka,* along with *munis, ṛishis,* and others of the same ilk. According to the *Vishṇu Purāṇa,* they dwell in "the region that extends from the earth to the sun *(i.e. bhuvarloka)*", along with other classes of divine and semi-divine beings.[3] The *Vishṇu Purāṇa* also says that eighty-eight thousand *siddhas* inhabit the regions of the sky north of the *Nāgavithī* ('row of serpents', the stars of the constellations Aries and Taurus) and south of the dwelling of the seven *ṛishis* (the stars of the constellation of the Great Bear).[4] In Hindu tradition, these divine and semi-divine *siddhas* are often associated with specific locations, especially with particular mountains or mountainous regions.[5] Sometimes, *siddhas* are understood either to inhabit or even to have taken on the form of particular sacred mountains, and are believed to make occasional personal appearances.[6] One of the most well-known of such instances is the sacred mountain Aruṇāchalam in Tamil Nadu, which is said to be both the Siddha Aruṇagiri Yogī as well as his place of habitation. Perfected *siddhas* who have left this world are thought to dwell in *siddhaloka,* a heavenly realm from where they may take human birth from time to time for the benefit of humanity.

Siddhas are also described as dwelling in a secret and secluded place in the Himalayas, known as *siddha-āshrama* (home of *siddhas*). In the *Rāmāyaṇa,* Ṛishi Vishvāmitra takes Rāma and his younger brother Lakshmaṇa on a (successful) mission to his dwelling in *siddha-āshrama* to eradicate the *rākshasas* (evil demons) who are disturbing his *yajñas* (sacrificial rites). There they meet many other *ṛishis.* Vishvāmitra also tells them that *siddha-āshrama* was formerly the dwelling place of *Vishṇu* in his fifth incarnation *(avatāra)* as *Vāmana* (the *brāhmaṇ* dwarf).[7]

Siddhas also appear in a story told to Rāma by his *guru,* the sage Vasishṭha. The young Shukra, having seen a beautiful nymph flying in the sky, is "overcome by desire", and "closing his eyes, he mentally pursues her":

> He reached heaven. There he saw the radiant celestial beings, gods and their consorts, the celestial elephant and horses. He saw the creator *Brahmā* himself, and the other deities who govern the universe. He saw the *siddhas* (perfected beings). He listened to celestial music. He visited the celestial gardens in heaven.
>
> *Yoga Vāsishṭha 4:6, VYV p.148*

Siddhas as Holy Men

In historical times, *siddha* was commonly associated with *Nāths,* yogis, wandering saints, *avadhūtas* (extreme renunciates), scholarly *gurus,* and ascetic mystic adepts who were recognized as holy or divine due to their high spiritual attainment. From around the eleventh century until recent times, *siddha* has also been applied retrospectively to earlier historical figures in recognition of their state of spiritual perfection.[8] In modern times, the term is used for any kind of unorthodox saint or mystic.[9]

Since the medieval period, *siddha* has been used predominantly in traditions with tantric roots, sometimes as an institutional title – by *Nāth Siddha* sects, for example, where it may or may not signify true perfection:[10]

> As a proper noun, *siddha* becomes a broad sectarian appellation, applying to devotees of *Shiva* in the Deccan *(Maheshvara Siddhas),* alchemists in Tamil Nadu *(siddhars),* a group of early Buddhist *tāntrikas* from Bengal *(mahāsiddhas, siddhāchāryas),* the alchemists of medieval India *(Rasa Siddhas)* and, most especially, a mainly North Indian group known as the *Nāth Siddhas.* These last two groups greatly overlapped one another, with many of the most important *Nāth Siddhas* – Gorakh, Matsyendra, Carpaṭi, Dattatreya, Nāganātha, Ādinātha, and others – being the authors (if only by attribution) or transmitters of a wide array of revealed yogic and alchemical teachings.
>
> *David White, Alchemical Body, ABST p.2*

The ideal of certain medieval tantric *siddha* sects was the attainment of perfection and liberation through transubstantiation, etherealization, or even the attempted immortalization of the body; some *siddhas* are said to have lived for very long periods of time. The methods employed to attain this ideal included control of the breath and subtle life energies *(i.e. prāṇāyāma),* together with practices such as the consumption of *soma* juice *(somarasa),* eulogized in the *Vedas* as the source of immortality.[11] By these means, the *siddhas* also acquired the ability to manipulate the forces of nature, the paranormal powers so acquired being known as *siddhis.* Using a process of turning the mind and senses, as well as sexual energy, inwards and upwards, the spiritual goal of the *Nāths* was to achieve *jīvanmukti,* liberation while living, and finally *paramukti* or perfect union with *Shiva,* and immortalization in a perfected body. In order to achieve this, the *Nāths* were said to be "uncompromisingly celibate".[12]

It is also clear that at least some of the *Nāth Siddhas* also practised alchemy, together with herbal and various allied forms of natural medicine. The *Nāth* practice known as the *somarasa* technique also had an alchemical aspect, and the *Rasa Siddhas* (one meaning of *rasa* is mercury) and many celebrated

siddhas practised alchemy and contributed to alchemical and herbal literature. Abhinavagupta, an eleventh-century *siddha guru* of Kashmir Shaivism, was said to be familiar with both alchemical and tantric theory and practice, and commented on the inward symbolic purpose and meaning of these practices for practitioners on the spiritual path.[13]

The various Shaivite schools and traditions included a group known as the *Vīrashaivas.* The difference between the *Vīrashaiva* and *Nāth* perspectives on their doctrines and practices to attain perfection *(siddha)* is illustrated by a legend in which the *Vīrashaiva* Allama Prabhu and the *Nāth Siddha* Gorakhnāth engage in a *siddhi* contest. "When Allama Prabhu takes his sword to Gorakh, its blade shatters on his adamantine body; when Gorakh does the same to Allama Prabhu, his sword passes straight through his body, which is wholly etherealized. Allama Prabhu then chides Gorakh" for the density of the illusion he had created, saying that it reflects the density of Gorakh's illusion.[14] The story is of course of *Vīrashaiva* origin, the implication being that the *Vīrashaiva* perspective and practices are more subtle than those of the *Nāths.*

Although the practice of *haṭha yoga* is said to have existed from Vedic times (1500 BCE), it is probably from this tradition of body cultivation *(kāya-sādhana)* that the various schools of *haṭha yoga* originated. The origins of *haṭha yoga* are traditionally linked to the legendary Matsyendranāth (probably *c.*C8th–10th CE), although its widespread practice in the *Nāth* tradition is generally associated with Gorakhnāth, a disciple of Matsyendranāth.

Among some of the more well-known yogic texts, *siddhas* are regarded as rare beings with the ability to guide genuine seekers to escape the bonds of the material world. The *Yogashikhā Upanishad* remarks that seekers who are still full of human weaknesses can meet a *siddha* only as a result of good *karma.* Only by earning spiritual merit and by the grace of the *siddha* can they become true yogis and attain liberation:

> There are other so-called men of gnosis who, being full of passion, are continually in thrall to their body.… Such a man attains association with a *siddha* after some time, and only by earning religious merit *(puṇya).* Then he becomes a *yogin,* but only through the grace of the *siddha,* and not otherwise. Only thereafter does the cycle of birth and death cease for him, not otherwise.
>
> *Yogashikhā Upanishad 1:48, 50–51; cf. YU pp.336–37*

The fifteenth-century *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* describes the teachers and *gurus* of *haṭha yoga* practitioners as *siddhas.* It considers the goal of *haṭha yoga* to be the perfection and liberation of a *siddha.* For this, practice is essential:[15]

> Success *(siddhi)* results from practice. Without practice how can anything happen? Success *(siddhi)* in *yoga* can never be attained just

> by reading books *(shāstras),* nor by wearing the garb of a *siddha,* nor by talking about it. Only through practice does one become a *siddha.* This is undoubtedly the truth.
>
> *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā 1:67–68; cf. HYP p.11*

The place prepared for such practice, it says, is described in detail by the *siddhas:*

> This is the description of the *yoga* hermitage *(maṭha)* as prescribed by the *siddhas* (adepts) for *haṭha yoga* practitioners. The room for *sādhana* (practice) should have a small door, without aperture (window), holes or cracks, being neither too high nor too low. It should be spotlessly clean, wiped with cow manure and free from animals or insects. Outside, there should be an open platform with thatched roof, a well, and a surrounding fence. The appearance of the hermitage should be pleasant.
>
> *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā 1:13; cf. HYPM*

The *Nārada Bhakti Sūtras* speak of the divine love and devotion by which a person becomes spiritually perfect *(siddha):*

> Devotion has the essential nature of immortality *(amṛita).*
> Gaining it, a person becomes perfect *(siddha)* and immortal *(amṛita),*
> and becomes contented.
> Attaining it, a person neither desires, nor grieves,
> nor feels enmity, nor rejoices, nor does he further his own
> self-interest.
> Realizing it, a person becomes intoxicated and absorbed,
> one who rejoices in the supreme Spirit *(Ātman).*
>
> *Nārada Bhakti Sūtras 3–6; cf. NBST pp.1–2*

In his commentary on this text, Swami Tyagisananda explains:

> A *siddha* or a perfect man is one who has attained the goal of all spiritual endeavour. The goal of all human aspiration is perfection. Until perfection is attained, practice has to be continued, in spite of the minor attainments and psychic powers that one may come to be endowed with. Perfection is already inherent in man. It is only clouded by ignorance. When *māyā* or ignorance is transcended through spiritual practices, the natural perfection of the *Ātman* manifests itself, as the sun shines when the clouds clear away. The function of *sādhana* or practice is only to remove this cloud of *māyā*. . . .
>
> In ordinary parlance, the word *siddha* denotes a man possessing various superhuman powers. The *Yoga Sūtras* (of Patañjali)[16] make

> it clear that these superhuman powers or *siddhis* are obstacles to the highest realization.... The sign of a perfect man or *siddha* is not the possession of miraculous powers, but the attainment of unity with the supreme Being.
>
> *Swami Tyagisananda, on Nārada Bhakti Sūtras 4, NBST pp.67–68*

Siddhars of Tamil Nadu

In South India, particularly Tamil Nadu, *siddhar* (also transliterated as *sittar* or *cittar*), generally refers to a group of eighteen saints who reached the goal of liberation. For the most part they came from the Shaivite tradition and practised a kind of spiritual discipline *(sādhana)* that included *prāṇāyāma.* It was believed that by this means they could attain both spiritual and physical perfection. They were also credited with possessing both major and minor spiritual powers, in particular the *ashṭama-siddhis* or eight great perfections. Foremost among the Tamil *siddhars* are the legendary Akattiyar (S. Agastya), a Tamil Vedic *siddhar* and Sanskrit scholar regarded in Tamil Nadu as the first *siddhar,* and associated with the origins of the Tamil language; the eighth-century Tirumūlar, one of the eighteen Tamil Nadu *siddhars,* who is also listed among the sixty-three Nāyanār saints of the *Shaiva Siddhānta* sect,[17] and was the author of the Tamil *Tirumantiram,* said to include the first mention of *Shaiva Siddhānta;* and the late-medieval Akappey, who described Reality as the *Shūnya* (Void).[18]

Patañjali, author of the *Yoga Sūtras,* is listed among the eighteen Tamil Nadu *siddhars,* and is said to be from the South Indian *siddhar* tradition. He says that a vision *(darshana)* of the *siddhas* ('the perfected ones') can be attained by concentration on the divine light in the head:

> Deep meditation *(saṃyama)* on the effulgent light *(jyotis)*
> in the centre in the head, results in the vision of the *siddhas.*
>
> *Patañjali, Yoga Sūtras 3:33*

The *Yoga-Bhāshya* (commentary) explains:

> There is a shining light in the hole which is within the skull. From the performance of *saṃyama* thereupon comes the vision *(darshana)* of the *siddhas,* who move through the ethereal space between the earth and the sky.
>
> *Yoga-Bhāshya, on Yoga Sūtras 3:33, YSBB (3:31) p.85*

The Siddhas of Kashmir Shaivism

Forming around a large body of agamic and tantric texts, the tantric movement emerged some time between the first and fourth centuries CE, becoming a major influence on the religions and cultural traditions of India from the

seventh to eighth centuries. The *Āgamas* and *tantras* are said to be divinely revealed rather than authored by human beings. According to legend, this vast wealth of *Āgamas* and *tantras* was revealed at the beginning of the *satyuga* (about four million years ago), from the five mouths of a five-headed form of *Shiva,* called *Svachchhanda-nātha.* This knowledge flourished through the subsequent *yugas,* only to disappear at the start of the present age *(kaliyuga),* when the masters holding the oral teachings hid themselves and their knowledge from the world. *Shiva,* however, once again desiring the illumination of the universe, reappeared at Mount Kailāsh as Shrīkaṇṭhanātha, where he revealed the *tantras* to sage Durvāsā Ṛishi, who created fifteen (male and female) mind-born and celibate *siddhas.* When one of them decided to marry a human being and settle in Kashmir, he produced descendents in the normal manner, which became the historical lineage of the tenth to twelfth-century Kashmir Shaivite *siddha* masters Somānanda, Utpaladeva, and Abhinavagupta.[19]

The actual story is no doubt as complex, if more prosaic, but it is accepted that from the first century CE onwards, Kashmir had been a flourishing centre of philosophical and religious learning, with sects and lineages of the two main Hindu streams (Shaivism and Vaishnavism) and various Buddhist schools flourishing side by side. Although Shaivism came to predominate, Buddhism and Hindu Vaishnavism also prospered. Between the ninth and thirteenth centuries, in this milieu of agamic and tantric schools, orthodox Hindu *darshanas* and Buddhist polemics, a network of scholarly Shaivite *siddha gurus* emerged, who produced a remarkable body of non-dual philosophical and doctrinal work that has become known as Kashmir Shaivism. These Shaivite *siddha* masters taught and gave initiation *(dīkshā, shaktipāta)* into the practice and philosophy of non-dual Shaivism to their close circles of students and disciples.[20]

Nāth Traditions

Although the legendary if not mythological Ādinātha ('First Lord', often referring to the deity *Shiva*) and Ṛishi Dattatreya are often named as the first *Nāth Siddhas,* the actual historical sect of *Nāths* seems to have begun between the eighth and tenth centuries. According to tradition, the lineage was founded by Matsyendranāth, a simple fisherman from Bengal. Matsyendranāth had eight disciples who together are known as the *Navnāths* (nine *Nāths*), and who are often included in lists of both Tamil Nadu *siddhars* and Tibetan *mahāsiddhas.* While Matsyendranāth is regarded as the founder, the great expansion of the *Nāth* movement throughout the subcontinent is attributed to his best-known disciple Gorakhnāth (also known as Gorakshanātha), who travelled widely throughout India. In Tamil Nadu, he is known as Korakkar, and sometimes as the guardian of alchemy, since the *Nāths* were also linked with the alchemical *Rasa Siddhas.*[21]

Gorakhnāth is regarded as the founder of *kānphaṭā yoga* (*kānphaṭā* meaning slit-eared) – a pan-Indian *Nāth* sect for whom he established monasteries *(maṭhs),* an organizational structure, and strict rules relating to the order. It is said that he originated the practice of splitting the ears from which their name originated, *kānphaṭā* being first used as a derogatory epithet applied to them by Muslims. Gorakh is regarded as the author of several texts including the *Avadhūta Gītā,* the *Gorakh Saṃhitā* on *haṭha yoga,* and the first books on *laya yoga.* Various sacred places throughout the subcontinent are associated with Gorakhnāth, such as Gorkha in western Nepal; Gorakh hill in Sindh, Pakistan; and Gorakhnāth peak, the highest of the five peaks of Mount Girnār in Gujarat.[22] Over time, the widespread *Nāth Siddhas* formed into twelve or more streams connected through their adherence to the teachings of Matsyendranāth and Gorakhnāth, and regarded as a "confederation of groups" rather than one monolithic order.[23]

Tibetan Buddhist Mahāsiddhas

In Tibetan Buddhism, which drew heavily on the neighbouring *Vajrayāna* Buddhist schools of India, the *siddhas* or *mahāsiddhas* (T. *grub thob chen po*) are greatly venerated, and many exotic stories are told about them. As perfected beings with extra-ordinary powers, the Tibetan *mahāsiddhas* are understood in much the same way as the *siddhas* of Indian tantric origin. Allowing for cultural variations, the hagiographic accounts surrounding them are of essentially the same nature.

The introduction of tantric Buddhism to Tibet is generally credited to the eighth-century Indian Buddhist Padmasambhava, son of the king of Swat Valley and founder of the Tibetan Buddhist *Nyingma* lineage. Padmasambhava is described as a *mahāsiddha* and is revered by the *Nyingma* school as the second *buddha.* However, Tibetans routinely crossed into North India to seek initiation from tantric *gurus,* so the introduction of tantric Buddhism into Tibet is unlikely to have been the work of a single teacher. The ninth-century Virūpa and other tantric teachers are also known to have played a part.

Several principal *mahāsiddhas,* including Padmasambhava and Nāropa, another of the early masters of Tibetan Buddhism, had at one time lived in or near the neighbouring region of Kashmir. It has been previously mentioned that, for several centuries, Kashmir had been a thriving centre of learning for both Hindus and Buddhists. Introduced to Kashmir as early as the third century BCE, by the first century CE most Buddhist schools were flourishing in Kashmir. During these early centuries, a new movement of agamic and tantric doctrines and practices was quietly evolving among many Hindu and Buddhist sects and schools of Kashmir. This tantric movement inspired the subsequent development of both Tibetan Buddhism and Kashmir Shaivism between the eighth and twelfth centuries.[24]

Renowned Tibetan *mahāsiddhas* include the Indian Buddhist yogi Tilopa

(988–1069), founder of the *Mahāmudrā* ('Great Seal') tradition, a collection of practices intended to hasten the process of enlightenment. Tilopa is said to have received the *Mahāmudrā* techniques in a vision during meditation on the Buddha Vajradhara, the primordial *buddha* according to the *Geluk* and *Kagyū* schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Tilopa's foremost disciple and successor, known in Tibet as the Mahāsiddha Nāropa (*c.*1016–1100), was born Abhayakīrti Jñānasiddhi into a Kashmiri *brāhmaṇ* family, and became a Hindu *paṇḍit* and tantric scholar, before converting to Buddhism. Later becoming abbot of Nālandā, he is considered one of the early masters of the *Kagyū* lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, and is especially remembered for the six *yogas* of Nāropa, a series of advanced yogic practices described in the *Anuttara-Yoga Tantra* ('Unsurpassed *Yoga Tantra*').

Nāropa's foremost disciple and lineage holder was the Tibetan Marpa Lotsawa (1012–1097), later known as 'Marpa the translator' for the numerous Sanskrit Buddhist texts he had brought to Tibet from his travels and which he had translated into Tibetan. Travelling several times to Nepal and three times to India in search of Buddhist teachings, he is said to have learned from 108 Buddhist masters, the greatest of whom were Nāropa and Maitrīpāda, the latter closely linked with the *Mahāmudrā* tradition. Returning to Tibet, Marpa founded the *Kagyū* school, merging the lineages of Nāropa and Maitrīpāda.[25]

Another well-known Tibetan *mahāsiddha* was Milarepa (1052–1135), a disciple of Marpa Lotsawa, and another significant figure in the development of early Tibetan Buddhism. According to the traditional account, Milarepa was an evil sorcerer in his youth, responsible for a number of deaths resulting from a freak hail storm, which he had invoked in revenge against an uncle and aunt who has usurped the family fortune after the death of his father. Repenting of his misdeeds, he sought Marpa Lotsawa as his *guru.*

At first, Marpa refused to accept Milarepa as a disciple, making him build and demolish three towers as a test, culminating in a fourth and final, nine-storey defence tower, which – if the story is to be believed – is one that is still standing at Lhodrak in southern Tibet. Impatient to progress, and thinking that he would never be accepted by his *guru,* Milarepa left Marpa to study with another *lama,* who taught him meditation techniques. Milarepa never told the *lama* that he had previously sought initiation from another master, but in the absence of results, he finally admitted his deception, at which the *lama* advised him that he would be unable to make any progress without Marpa's consent. Returning to his *guru,* Milarepa learned everything that Marpa had learned from Nāropa, and went on to practise solitary meditation and intense austerities for twelve years before attaining enlightenment. The name of Milarepa (Mila, the cotton-clad) was given to him at this time. At the age of forty-five, he became a wandering teacher. His many songs and poems expressing the depth of his spiritual realization have become well-known Tibetan Buddhist texts.[26]

Milarepa's successor was Gampopa (*c.*1079–1153), a physician from southern Tibet, and another significant teacher in the early *Kagyū* tradition.[27] Gampopa is regarded as the one who brought together the Tibetan *Mahāmudrā* and *Mahāyāna Kadampa* traditions, laying further foundations for what became the more formalized *Kagyū* tradition. Gampopa had many disciples, founded a number of monastic institutions, and his lucid summary of spiritual teachings, translated as the *Jewel Ornament of Liberation,* has become a classic of early Tibetan Buddhist literature. The *Kagyū* lineage continues as the Golden Rosary of the *Karmapa* Black Hat lineage.[28]

Siddha and Mahāsiddha Lists

Many of the traditions that speak of *siddhas,* past and present, have maintained lineage lists and inventories of venerated *siddhars, siddhas,* and *mahāsiddhas.* Such groups include Kashmir Shaivism, the *Nāth Siddha* cults of North India, the *Rasa Siddha* alchemist sects, the *Vīrashaiva Siddhas* of South India, the *bhakta* lineages of Maharashtra, and the various schools of tantric Buddhism. The differences in doctrines, beliefs and practices between the various lineages and schools are as noteworthy as the similarities, and it is generally acknowledged that much remains to be done to try and untangle the web of relationships between them. Many texts remain untranslated and, since many others have been lost, it is unlikely that the full story will ever be known.[29]

The number of *siddhas* in these lists varies, with some overlapping of names between the different traditions. This typifies the Indian tendency to venerate and adopt saints from other traditions, an extreme example perhaps being the adoption of the Buddha by Vaishnavites as an incarnation or avatar of *Vishṇu.* At least two names from a list of the nine *Nāths* appear in both Tibetan Buddhist lists of *mahāsiddhas* and the South Indian lists of Tamil Nadu *siddhars.* The names most frequently repeated are Ādinātha ('First Lord'); the legendary Matsyendranāth, founder of the *Nāth* tradition and known in Tibet as Luipa; and his principal disciple Gorakhnāth, generally believed to have been responsible for the wide expansion of the *Nāth* tradition throughout North India and beyond.[30]

Seventy-six *siddhas* are named in a medieval Maithilī manuscript (dated Lakshmaṇa Saṃvat 388, 1506 CE) of the encyclopaedia *Varṇa-Ratnākara,* compiled by Kavishekharāchārya Jyotirīshvara Ṭhākura, poet and scholar in the court of King Harisiṃhadeva of Mithilā (*r.*1300–1321). The list includes the nine *Nāths,* such as Gorakhnāth, together with Buddhist *siddhāchāryas* (perfected teachers).[31]

The *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* similarly lists around thirty *mahāsiddhas,*[32] a number of whom also appear in the *Varṇa-Ratnākara.* Though many are more mythological than historical, these *mahāsiddhas* are venerated as god-like human beings. The list includes *Shiva* (traditionally understood to have been the first yogi), Matsyendranāth, Shabara, Ānandabhairava, Chaurangin, and many others:

> These *mahāsiddhas,* having conquered time (*kāl,* also death) by the practice of *haṭha yoga,* roam about the universe.
>
> *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā 1:9, HYP p.2*

Tibetan Buddhist inventories of *mahāsiddhas* list between eighty-four and eighty-eight *mahāsiddhas,* both men and women, who attained perfection *(siddhi)* through various yogic and tantric practices. A twelfth-century list of the eighty-four *siddhas* is most often mentioned, eighty-four being considered a whole or perfect number, perhaps the most appropriate number of perfect beings. Indicative of the many links between these traditions, the list includes various anomalies, such as Nāropa (20th on the list), who comes two places before his *guru* Tilopa, and Gorakhnāth (9th), who was a Hindu, not a Buddhist. The list includes other non-Buddhists together with various historical anachronisms.[33]

Jainism

In Jainism, *siddhas* are liberated souls who are no longer in the body. They are one of the five great beings *(pañcha-parameshṭhin)* invoked in the *namaskāra mantra,* an ancient Prakrit sacred formula used as a prayer of homage, obeisance and salutation to the *pañcha-parameshṭhin* who are deemed worthy of worship. These five are Jain *arahantas* (enlightened ones), *siddhas, āchāryas* (Jain mendicant leaders), *upādhyāyas* (teachers), and *sādhus* (ordinary Jain mendicants). Having attained *kevala-jñāna* (knowledge of *kaivalya,* union with the Absolute), *moksha* (liberation) or *nirvāṇa* (enlightenment), a *siddha* has become omniscient. He has attained the fourteenth *guṇasthāna* (stage) on the journey to enlightenment. All eight kinds of *karma* have been destroyed, and there is no further liability to rebirth. According to Jain cosmogony, after leaving this world, *siddhas* dwell for all eternity in a crescent-shaped realm known as *siddhaloka, siddha-kshetra* or *siddha-shīlā,* which lies at the very top of the universe, above the heavens where the gods dwell.[34] This is mentioned in a number of Jain texts:

> A *siddha* is one who has achieved his true purpose,
> has pure meditation, and is endowed with knowledge;
> Such a *siddha,*
> the best among holy recluses and aware of his true purpose,
> is called a *siddhāyatana* (abode of perfection).
>
> *Kundakunda, Ashṭapāhuḍa 4:7; cf. APAK*

> Those (souls), who have destroyed the bondage of the eight *karmas,*
> who are possessed of the eight great attributes,
> who abide at the uppermost limit of the universe,
> and who are the most exalted and indestructible, are *siddhas.*
>
> *Kundakunda, Niyamasāra 4:72; cf. NAKU*

> May the path of emancipation be shown to me by perfected *siddhas,*
> who have freed themselves from the eight kinds of *karma,*
> who have attained complete fulfilment,
> who have freed themselves from the cycle of birth and death,
> and who have known the essence of all the things.
>
> *Samansuttam 8; cf. SSJV*

The Jain *siddha* is said to possess eight attributes: infinite wisdom *(ananta-jñāna),* infinite perception *(ananta-darshana),* perfect conduct *(ananta-chāritra),* infinite energy *(ananta-vīrya),* unbroken bliss *(avyābādha-sukha),* immortality *(akshaya-sthiti),* formlessness *(arūpitva),* and equality with all other *siddhas (aguru-laghutva).*[35]

See also: **nātha yoga** (▸3), **siddhi** (7.4).

1. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* pp.6–10.
2. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* p.2.
3. *Vishṇu Purāṇa* 2:7.
4. *Vishṇu Purāṇa* 2:8.
5. Paul Muller-Ortega, "The Siddha – Paradoxical Exemplar," in *MRSY* p.183.
6. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* p.118; see also *ABST* pp.114–19, 327–34.
7. *Rāmāyaṇa* 1:29.2–4.
8. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* p.69.
9. Layne Little, *Introduction to the Tamil Siddhas, ITSL.*
10. Paul Muller-Ortega, "The Siddha – Paradoxical Exemplar," in *MRSY* p.168.
11. *E.g. Ṛig Veda* 8:48.3.
12. Paul Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart of Śiva, THSK* pp.37–38.
13. Paul Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart of Śiva, THSK* pp.35–36.
14. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* pp.102–3.
15. See also *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* 1:13; 2:29, 33; 3:8, 13, 76, *HYPM.*
16. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 3:38.
17. Layne Little, *Introduction to the Tamil Siddhas, ITSL;* see also "Nayanars," "Siddhar," *Wikipedia,* ret. April 2014.
18. Georg Feuerstein, *Tantra, TPEF* p.263.
19. Swami Lakshman Jee, *Kashmir Shaivism, KSSL* pp.89–95.
20. Paul Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart of Śiva, THSK* pp.25–44; Mark Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration, DVKS* pp.4–22.
21. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* pp.2–5, 9–10, 111, *passim.*
22. G.W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphaṭa Yogīs, GKYB* pp.1, 78–79, 101, 230, *passim.*
23. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* p.90.
24. Mark Dyczkowski, *Doctrine of Vibration, DVKS* pp.1–3.

25. For Marpa, Tilopa, and Nāropa, see Tsang Nyön Heruka, *Life of Marpa the Translator, LMTH* pp.xxvi–xxviii, xxxi–xxxv, *passim;* "Tilopa," "Naropa," *Wikipedia,* ret. May 2014; *The Golden Rosary, KWGK.*
26. *Life of Milarepa* 1:3, 2:1–9, *LMTT* pp.22–35, 41–197.
27. See "Milarepa," *Wikipedia,* ret. May 2013.
28. See *Golden Rosary, KWGK;* "Gampopa," *Wikipedia,* ret. May 2014.
29. Paul Muller-Ortega, *Triadic Heart of Śiva, THSK* pp.16–18.
30. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* pp.80–87.
31. Kavishekharāchārya Jyotirīshvara Ṭhākura, *Varṇa-Ratnākara,* Ms. 48/34, Asiatic Society of Bengal.
32. *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* 1:4–8, *HYPM* pp.30, 32.
33. David White, *Alchemical Body, ABST* pp.80–87.
34. See "siddha," *Wikipedia,* ret. March 2012.
35. *Jain Philosophy and Practice, JPP2.*

ṣiddīq (A/P) (pl. *ṣiddīqīn, ṣiddīqūn,* fem. *ṣiddīqah*) *Lit.* truthful, veracious, sincere, upright, righteous; a truthful, veracious, sincere, righteous or upright person; a righteous one, a truthful one, a veracious one; used in the *Qur'ān* for a sincere believer, a truthful witness (of God), and a follower of Islam;[1] also, commonly applied to Sufis, especially as a saint, a mystic, a holy man, an adept; from the same root as the Hebrew *ẓaddik* (righteous, righteous one), a name given to Jewish and Manichaean holy men and mystics, from where the use of the term in this context has probably come into Islam; also, as the *ṣiddīqūn,* sometimes listed as forty in number, members of the unseen hierarchy of *awliyā'* (friends of God, saints), who differ in their degree of spirituality, but whose presence in the world is necessary for the maintenance of stability and harmony; also, an epithet (as *al-Ṣiddīq,* the Truthful One) given in the *Qur'ān* to the biblical Joseph,[2] renowned for his great beauty and integrity, often appearing in stories as the archetype of a mystic or saint; also, as the "Truthful One and prophet *(ṣiddīq nabī)*", a Quranic designation of Enoch,[3] and Abraham,[4] the latter also being designated the Friend (Khalīl) of God;[5] also, and very commonly, an epithet given by Muḥammad to his sincere follower, close friend and father-in-law Abū Bakr, in view of his sincerity and unconditional trust in the Prophet, because of which he was appointed as the first caliph after Muḥammad's death.

According to the story, Muḥammad was taken on a Night Journey *(Miʿrāj)* from Mecca to *Bayt al-Muqaddas* (Holy Temple, the Temple of Solomon) in Jerusalem and back again, an event generally interpreted by Sufis as an allegory for a mystical rather than geographical experience. The next morning, when Muḥammad related to his local community what had happened, most of them said, "By God, the matter is clear! A camel train takes a month to go to Shām (Syria) and a month to return. Does that Muḥammad go there and

return to Mecca in a single night?" And at this point many of the Prophet's followers lost faith in him.

The people then went to Abū Bakr and asked him what he thought. When he said, "You must be lying about him!", they responded, "On the contrary, there he is in the prayer enclosure telling people about it!" Abū Bakr replied: "By God, if he said it, it must be true *(ṣadaqa).* What, by God, are you so amazed about? By God, he has told me that a communication comes to him from *Allāh* all the way from the heaven to the earth in a single hour of the day or night, and I believed him to be true – and that goes beyond what you find so amazing."

Abū Bakr then went to the Prophet and asked him to describe what he had seen, for he had himself been to *Bayt al-Muqaddas.* As Muḥammad described what he had seen, Abū Bakr kept on saying, "You have told the truth. I testify that you are the *Rasūl Allāh* (Messenger of God)." When he had finished, Muḥammad said to him, "You, Abū Bakr, are the *Ṣiddīq* (the one who testified to the truth, *ṣaddaqa*)," and from that day on, he called him the *Ṣiddīq*.[6]

According to the incident as retold by Rūmī, Abū Bakr's trust was the result of the Prophet's intent look, together with Abū Bakr's faith and steadfast returning gaze. Generalizing on the story, Rūmī suggests that the easiest way to become a true *ṣiddīq* is to keep company with perfect saints ("the fortunate"), and to hope for one of their "glances" of grace:

> Companionship with the fortunate is like an elixir:
> Indeed, how can an elixir
> compare with one of their glances *(naẓar)?*
> The eye of Muḥammad was cast upon an Abū Bakr:
> through a single act of faith, he became a *ṣiddīq.*
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:2687–88; cf. MJR2 p.146*

Rūmī also points out that Abū Bakr required no proof by way of a miracle, as the coarse-minded sometimes crave. Abū Bakr's faith stemmed from his own purity and love:

> Abū Jahl, like a vindictive Ghuzz Turcoman,
> demanded a miracle from the Prophet;
> But that *Ṣiddīq* of God did not crave a miracle:
> he said, "Verily, this face speaks nothing but truth."
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:350–51; cf. MJR4 p.291*

According to a related story, Muḥammad declared Abū Bakr to be an examplar of someone who had followed his injunction, "Die before you die," and had thus earned the further title, Prince of the Resurrected *(Amīr al-Muḥsharīn).* Rūmī says that Abū Bakr had learnt how the soul could

leave the body while still living in it by becoming entirely imbued with the mystic Truth. He also indicates in passing that this is the real meaning of the "Resurrection":

Muḥammad said, "O seeker of the mysteries,
if you want to see a dead man living –
Walking on the earth, like living men,
yet dead and his spirit gone to heaven;
Whose spirit has its dwelling place on high at this very moment,
such that, should he die, his spirit is not translated,
because it has been translated before his death –
Then this can only be understood by dying,
not by the exercise of reason;
Translation it is, but not like the translation
of the spirits of ordinary men:
It resembles a removal from one place to another.

"And if anyone should wish to see a dead man
walking thus visibly on the earth –
Let him behold Abū Bakr, the devout,
who, through being an entirely Truthful One *(Ṣiddīq),*
became the Prince of the Resurrected *(Amīr al-Muḥsharīn).*
In this life, look at the *Ṣiddīq,*
that you may believe more firmly in the Resurrection."

Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:742–49; cf. MJR6 p.299

Speaking generally of the saints, Rūmī points out that knowledge of the spiritual "Way" and "association with the *ṣiddīq* (saint)" is of inestimable spiritual value, and is not to be taken lightly:

If the Way should be opened up to anyone,
let him offer his head (self-identity),
for it has come from their mercy and their pull.
Therefore, when you have association with the *ṣiddīq,*
deem that divine favour to be a precious opportunity.
Do not be like the fool who wins the favour of the king,
and then lightly and easily falls away from the Path.
When more of that favour is bestowed on him,
then he says, "Surely this is the thigh of an ox."
This does not consist of the thigh of an ox,
O deviser of falsehood!
It appears to you to be the thigh of an ox
because you are an ass.

> This is a royal gift devoid of any impurity:
> this is pure munificence springing from great mercy.
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:712–17; cf. MJR4 p.311*

Some Sufis have tried to identify the stage of spiritual development characterizing the *ṣiddīq*. Hujwīrī quotes the saying "Purity is characteristic of the *ṣiddīq,*" going on to explain that this is so,

> because purity *(ṣafā)* has a root and a branch: its root being detachment of the heart from others, and its branch that the heart should be empty of this deceitful world.
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM p.35; cf. KM p.31*

Rūmī, on the other hand, places love as the primary force within the *ṣiddīq:*

> Love makes the wine of realization ferment:
> he (love) is the secret cupbearer of the *ṣiddīq*.
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī III:4742; cf. MJR4 p.264*

1. *Qur'ān* 4:69, 57:19.
2. *Qur'ān* 12:46.
3. *Qur'ān* 19:56.
4. *Qur'ān* 19:41.
5. *Qur'ān* 4:125.
6. Ibn Hishām, *Kitāb Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* 1:265; *cf.* in *EIM* p.327 (n.34).

sikkhamat (Thai) *Lit.* studying, training, or learning (Pa. *sikkhā*) + mother *(mātā);* a Thai Buddhist laywoman who embraces some of the ten precepts governing a nun's lifestyle, and who wears white robes, but is not fully ordained; also called *mae chee.* See **mae chee**.

siklīgar (H) *Lit.* knife-grinder; one who sharpens knives; one who had the inherited duty of polishing weapons; from the Arabic, *ṣayqal* (polisher); metaphorically, a *guru* who grinds away the rust and dirt so that the inherent light of the soul may once more become apparent.

Paltū and Kabīr both write that the knife-grinder *guru* uses the divine Word or Name as his grindstone:

> When you meet *satguru* the knife-grinder *(siklīgar),*
> then the ancient stain will be removed.

The age-old stain will be removed,
for your mind is coated with rust.
Without the perfect master,
the deep-seated stain will not go.
With the pumice of love and devotion,
scour the rusting sword of your mind.
By grinding the attention,
he burns away the layers.
The melody of the Word is the grindstone,
inner knowledge the abrasive;
Scour with the technique of union –
only then will the mind's stain disappear.
Clean your sword, O Paltū,
and hone it on the whetstone of inner detachment.
Only when you meet *satguru,* the knife grinder *(siklīgar),*
will the ancient stain of *karma* be removed.

Paltū, Bānī 1, Kuṇḍalī 2, PSB1 p.5, SPLT pp.96–97

Submit yourself to the *guru,* the master grinder *(siklīgar).*
Let him burnish your mind: he will remove all layers of rust,
so that it shines like a mirror.
The disciple is the sword, *guru* the grindstone;
He will put the disciple on the whetstone of *Nām.*
If he bears the scouring by *Shabd,*
and still stays firm at the master's feet,
He will emerge a disciple, pure, and bright.

Kabīr, Sākhī Sangrah, Gurudev kā Ang 24–25, KSS p.3; cf. KWGN p.651

See also: **dhobī**, **kumhār**.

sitārah (P) *Lit.* star. See **najm**.

solitary A wide-ranging term covering a monk or religious person, man or woman, who lives in solitude; a religious recluse; in medieval times, a religious person living in solitude, and licensed in the diocese, perhaps undertaking some service in the neighbourhood; a religious person unattached to any particular religious order and following no rule. Solitaries, especially of the past, were also known as hermits or eremites, and 'enclosed' anchorites.

The term is usually reserved for those of the Christian tradition, though all mystical traditions have included those who have sought a solitary life

in quest of the Divine. Well-known medieval English solitaries include the anchoress Julian of Norwich (*c.*1342–1413), author of *Revelations of Divine Love,* and the hermit Richard Rolle (*c.*1300–1349), who wrote *The Fire of Love.* It is probable that Walter Hilton (*d.*1396), author of *The Ladder of Perfection* and other works, also passed some time as a solitary, and possibly, too, the unknown author of the *Cloud of Unknowing*.

Walter Hilton provides the essential rationale for the solitary life: to avoid distractions, and keep the inner being focused on God. This leads the way to the true solitude – "solitude of soul" or "solitude of heart":

> A soul is truly solitary when it loves God and devotes itself wholly to Him, and has lost all taste for the consolations of the world. And the better to maintain this solitude, it retires from the company of men if it can, and seeks physical solitude, since this greatly promotes solitude of soul and the free working of divine love. And the less interference it suffers from empty chatter without or unprofitable thoughts within, the freer it is to contemplate God. In this way, it attains solitude of heart.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:40, LPH pp.226–27*

The seventh-century Nestorian, Isaac of Nineveh, himself a monk, and for five months bishop of Nineveh until he relinquished the position and returned once more to monastic life, also observes that outward activity disturbs the inner peace:

> The care of practical things confuses the soul, and the distraction of work disturbs the mind and makes it lose its quietness and drives its peacefulness away from it. It is becoming for the solitary who has devoted himself to heavenly work that his mind be constantly free from care so that, when he examines his soul and meditates, he may not see in it anything belonging to this world, nor the desire for any visible object, so that, on account of his complete withdrawal from temporary things, he may be able to meditate upon the law of the Lord night and day, without any distraction.
>
> *Isaac of Nineveh, Treatises 6, On Excellence; cf. MTIN pp.55–56*

Even so, there is no doubt that the life of a solitary was hard. Discouragement and dejection, doubts concerning their faith and the life they had adopted, aversion to prayer and spiritual practice, desire for company – indeed anything that could come to mind probably did come to mind, and cause distress. Many were tormented by their passions, persistent suppressed sexual desire bringing great suffering. In order to overcome these negative thoughts, solitaries would take to fasting, limited food intake, sleep deprivation, and other ascetic practices. Only a small number experienced the highs of spiritual uplift; many

dwelt in the lowlands of permanent struggle. Some became unbalanced, a few went altogether insane.

The constant struggle against one's own lower nature is well illustrated in writings of the early ascetics. In one of his treatises, Isaac of Nineveh lists the many outer habits that go to make up a good solitary:

> The pride of Christ's church consists in the behaviour of the solitaries. Therefore, it is becoming to the solitary that the beauties of his habits shine on all sides: in the humble attitude of his limbs, in the simplicity of his habit, in his elevation above visible things, in the veracity of his renunciation, in his rigorous fasting, in his being continuously silent, in the subduing of his senses, in the continence of his aspect, in his not being quarrelsome with other people for any reason, in the sparingness of his speech, in his being pure from rancour, in his discriminate conscious simplicity.
>
> And it is becoming for him that it be known that he is alien to this harmful and fleeting life, and near to true and spiritual life, from his constantly being by himself, from his being unknown among men, from his not being tied to anyone by the bonds of comradeship and intimacy, from his quiet dwelling place, from the small space of his habitation, from his few and mean utensils, from his avoiding men, from his constant prayer, from his hating and avoiding honour, from his not being bound by temporal life, from his great patience, from his endurance in temptations, from his keeping aloof from rumours and from enquiries into worldly affairs, from his constant care for and meditation upon his true country, known by his sad countenance and his shrivelled face, from his constantly weeping night and day, and above all from his cautious chastity and his freedom from covetousness in small and great things.
>
> These are, in short, the manifest beauties of the solitary, which testify to his being wholly dead to the world and near unto God. It is becoming for him to think of these things constantly in order to acquire them.
>
> *Isaac of Nineveh, Treatises 11, On the Solitary Life, MTIN p.81*

He addresses, too, the difficulties of maintaining a focus on the spiritual life in the presence of daily struggle. He advises that the way through the darkness is always to keep the ultimate goal in view:

> As the eyes of the helmsman look to the stars, so, in all his long and difficult labours, the inner gaze of the solitary, during his whole course, is directed towards the aim which he has fixed in his mind the first day when he gave himself to sailing the rough sea of solitude, till

> he shall find the pearl for the sake of which he has entrusted himself to the not-to-be-explored floods of the ocean. And his gaze of hope makes light to him the whole burden of service, and the difficulties full of danger which meet him in his course.
>
> But he that, as soon as he enters solitude, does not set this aim to the profit he wishes to gather from his service, labouring at random as a man that combats the air, will never during his life escape the spirit of despondency. And one of two things will happen to him: either, no longer bearing the insupportable burden, he will be vanquished and give up solitude altogether; or, if he adheres to it, his cell becomes a dungeon in which he is tormented.
>
> *Isaac of Nineveh, Treatise 66, On Solitude, MTIN pp.313–14*

Nonetheless, those who have got on well with the solitary life have generally commended it. Richard Rolle would seem to have been born to it, for he frequently enjoyed exalted states of spiritual consciousness. In his case, he experienced the intensity of divine love as a heat or "fire" in his being, and a "celestial music" in his soul:

> What man in his senses would dare to set another state of life in the church above the solitary? In this state, men occupy themselves with no outward things, but give their attention only to heavenly contemplation, so as to be on fire with love for Christ, and put the cares of the world behind them. And so celestial music resounds within them, and sweet flowing melody gladdens the solitary. From such melody, the man who lives in the midst of clatter is distracted, and can but rarely meditate or pray.
>
> It is of the solitary that the psalmist speaks in a song of love, saying, "I will go into the place of His wonderful tabernacle, into the house of God."[1] And he describes the manner of his going – rejoicing and with songs of praise – saying, "In the voice of gladness and thanksgiving, the sound of the banquet."[2]
>
> And to show that solitude is essential for this, so that – away from outer song and racket – man may capture and retain some of the joy of that sound, he demonstrates elsewhere quite clearly, "I would get me away far off, and remain in solitude."[3]
>
> For truly in this life he is straining every fibre to burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit and, captured as well as comforted by the joy of love, to be glad in God. So the perfect solitary will burn vigorously in the love of God, and when he is enraptured above himself in contemplation, he is lifted up joyfully unto that sweet sound and heavenly music.
>
> Such a man indeed is like the seraphim: there is an inner blaze of indescribable and unwavering love. His heart is shaped by the divine

> fire and, ablaze beyond description, he is borne up to his Beloved. Indeed, at death he will be taken up at once to the highest seats of heaven, that he may dwell serenely. . . . And this will be his lot because he has been fired with indescribable love, and has sought only the glory of his Creator, and yet has walked humbly, and has not thought himself better than the rest of sinful men.
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 13; cf. FLML (1:13) pp.61–62, FLRR pp.84–85*

But this "heat", he says brings the greatest spiritual consolation, such that although sitting "in solitary state", he feels himself to be in heaven:

> The heat is such that no one can imagine it unless he has experienced its comfort for himself. His heart is bursting with song, a captive in the care of love. For of all the things I experience here, this is the most delightful, and I nearly die when it builds up in me by fervent love. Now my Beloved, grant that I may cease to live; for death, dreaded by so many, shall be to me as heavenly music. And though I am now physically sitting in solitary state, I seem to be seated in paradise, and there sweetly resounds a song of love for the joys my Beloved has given to me!
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 16; cf. FLML (1:16) p.76, FLRR p.97*

Though Richard Rolle and many others have insisted that such contemplation was only possible when away from the distractions of life, others have found a deep solitude and silence within themselves, whatever their outer occupation. Hence, when the more modern Staretz Silouan (1886–1938) was asked whether acting as a steward and living with so many people in the monastery made inner silence difficult, he replied:

> What does inner silence mean? . . . It means ceaseless prayer, with the mind dwelling in God. Father John of Kronstadt was always surrounded by people, yet he was more with God than many solitaries.
>
> *Staretz Silouan, in Monk of Mount Athos, MMA p.44*

See also: **anchorite**, **hermit**, **monk**, **solitary life** (▸3).

1. *Psalms* 43:3–4.
2. *Psalms* 42:4.
3. *Psalms* 55:7.

Son, **Son of God** (He. *ben Elohim, ben Yahweh,* Gk. *Hyios tou Theou,* L. *Dei Filius*) In Christianity, the second person of the Trinity – Jesus Christ;

mystically, the primal emanation or 'Son' of God the Father, also known as the Word (Gk. *Logos*); the incarnation of this power in the person of Jesus Christ; in Manichaeism, both Jesus and the mystic Mānī, as incarnations of the divine Word. Variants of the term include Son of the Most High, Son of the Blessed, Son of the Father, and Son of the Lord. The sons of God, generally in the plural, is a common expression for the godfearing and virtuous, as well as for the followers of Jesus, Mānī, and others.

According to the Christian doctrine of the incarnation – formulated by the church long after the death of Jesus, but developed from John's gospel – the divine Word, known as the Son of God or Only-begotten Son, became man:

> And the Word *(Logos)* was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten *(Monogenēs)* of the Father, full of grace and truth.
>
> *John 1:14, KJV*

God assumed human nature, becoming a man in the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Christ was therefore fully God and fully man. According to the doctrine, the human and divine natures are not separate, but are joined together in a 'hypostatic' union, forming a single person, in which the identity of each is said to have been preserved, rather than mixed or diminished. The early centuries of Christianity were marked by theological controversy over the nature of this mystical union, something that cannot, in fact, be understood either by intellect or the formulations of dogma.

That the essential Son of God is the divine Word, who became man in the form of Jesus, is therefore a fundamental part of Christian doctrine. Paul, writing before any of the gospels had been written, is clear in his letters that his conception of the nature of the Son of God was mystical. Whatever else the Son may have been to him in his understanding of Jesus Christ, he believed that the Son was the primary, mystic and creative power by which everything is created. He speaks of "Christ the Power *(Dynamis)* of God and the Wisdom *(Sophia)* of God",[1] and speaking of the "kingdom of his dear Son *(Hyios)*", he continues:

> For by him (the Son of the Father) were all things created,
> that are in heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible,
> whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers:
> All things were created by him.
>
> *Colossians 1:16; cf. KJV*

Among the early Christians, Clement of Alexandria (*c.*150–215), quoting one of the ancient Greek mystics, also says it clearly:

> Heraclitus . . . rightly said, "Men are gods, and gods are men." For the Word *(Logos)* himself is the manifest mystery: God in man, and man in God. And the mediator executes the Father's will; for the mediator is the Word, who is common to both – the Son of God *(Theou men Hyios),* the saviour of men; His servant, our teacher.
>
> *Clement of Alexandria, Instructor 3:1, WCA1 p.274*

Many other Christian writers have expressed the same belief. John of the Cross is speaking of this creative power when he writes that "Wisdom . . . is the Word, the Son of God,"[2] something that he reiterates in various places.[3] He also adds: "In this Son of God are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God."[4]

In the *Living Flame of Love,* he marvels at the amazing reach of the Word, the Son of God, which has the awesome power to create and sustain the entire creation, and yet can touch the soul with such subtlety:

> O delicate touch, O Word, Son of God, who, through the delicateness of your divine being, subtly penetrates the substance of my soul and, touching it wholly and delicately, absorbs it wholly in yourself in divine ways of sweetness which have never been heard of in the land of Canaan (this world). . . .
>
> O gentle air, so delicate and gentle! Say, how do you touch the soul so gently and delicately, when you are so terrible and powerful? O blessed, twice blessed, the soul whom you touch so gently, though you are so terrible and powerful! Tell it out to the world. No, tell it not to the world, for the world knows nothing of air so gentle, nor does it feel you, because it can neither receive you nor see you.
>
> *John of the Cross, Living Flame of Love II:16; cf. CWJC3 p.43*

Yet this Son of God, he says, is hidden in the divine Essence:

> The place where the Son of God is hidden is, as St John says, "the bosom of the Father", which is the divine Essence, which is removed from every mortal eye and hidden from all human understanding.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 1:3, CWJC2 p.187*

Many Christians have thought that the idea of the Word as the Son of God originated in Christianity, but this is incorrect. It is true that the notion or metaphor of the divine Word as God's primal Son is absent from the Hebrew Bible. Nevertheless, the imagery seems to have been in use by the first-century Philo Judaeus, the Alexandrian contemporary of Jesus who shows no indication of knowing about Jesus, firmly names the *Logos* as God's Firstborn Son

(Hyios).[5] Speaking of the mystic symbolism inherent in biblical descriptions of the garments of the high priest, he also says:

> For it was necessary that he who was consecrated to the Father of the creation should have His Son *(Hyios),* the most perfect in virtue, as intercessor *(paraclētos),* both for the forgiveness (*lit.* an amnesty or forgetfulness) of sins and for the abundant supply of the most unstinted blessings.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Life of Moses 2:26; cf. PCW6 pp.514–15, TGH1 pp.250–51*

This is the role of the Word and its personification in a master. Without the help of this Son, no man can reach God. As Jesus says in *Matthew:*

> No man knows the Son *(Hyios),* but the Father;
> Neither does any man know the Father, save the Son *(Hyios),*
> and he to whom the Son *(Hyios)* reveals Him.
>
> *Matthew 11:27; cf. KJV*

In John's gospel, the role of the Son as the incarnate Word is described in considerable depth. The Son is sent by God as a man, not so that He may judge the world, but so that those who follow him can find eternal life. Those who do not believe in the Son are "condemned already", and the "wrath of God" is upon them, for they will remain in this world and lose the opportunity of returning to God:

> For God so loved the world,
> that He gave His Only-begotten *(Monogenēs)* Son *(Hyios),*
> that whoever believes in him should not perish,
> but have eternal life.
> For God sent not His Son *(Hyios)* into the world to condemn the world,
> but that the world through him might be saved.
> He who believes in him is not condemned;
> But he who believes not is condemned already,
> because he has not believed in the Name
> of the Only-begotten *(Monogenēs)* Son of God *(Hyios tou Theou).*...
> He who believes in the Son *(Hyios)* has eternal life;
> And he who believes not in the Son *(Hyios)* shall not see life,
> but the wrath of God rests upon him.
>
> *John 3:16–18, 36; cf. KJV, RSV*

Even so, the Son does not act of himself, but is motivated and acts entirely by the will of God:

> Verily, verily, I say unto you,
> the Son *(Hyios)* can do nothing of himself,
> but only what he sees the Father do;
> For whatever things He does,
> these also does the Son *(Hyios)* do likewise.
> For the Father loves the Son *(Hyios),*
> and shows him all things that Himself does;
> And He will show him greater works than these,
> that you may marvel.
>
> *John 5:19–20; cf. KJV, RSV*

The primary role of the Son is to bring life to the spiritually dead people of the world. He does this by connecting them, baptizing them, or putting them in tune with the Holy Spirit, the divine Word, so that they can hear its divine music or "Voice":

> The dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God *(Hyios tou Theou),*
> and they that hear shall live.
>
> *John 5:25, KJV*

In the New Testament letter *1 John,* written by the author of John's gospel, says that the mystic power of the Son of God is manifested so that the power of the "devil" can be overcome:

> Little children, let no man deceive you:
> he who behaves righteously is righteous,
> even as he (Jesus) is righteous.
> He who commits sin is of the devil:
> for the devil sinned from the beginning.
> For this purpose was the Son of God *(Hyios tou Theou)* manifested:
> that he might destroy the works of the devil.
>
> *1 John 3:7–8; cf. KJV*

Although the expression, as a term for either the divine Word or for a prophet or saviour, is absent from the Hebrew Bible, the metaphorical use of family relationships such as 'son' or 'child' is common in all the ancient Middle Eastern literature, including the Bible. A 'son of strength' was a warrior; a 'son of death' was someone about to die; 'sons of wickedness' or 'sons of *Belial*'[6] were wicked men, and so on.

Though the expression 'son of God' does not have the meaning in the Hebrew Bible with which it later became endowed, it is nevertheless used to express the closeness between the soul and God. Angels were called the sons

of God *(ben Elohim),*[7] while in the Greek *Wisdom of Solomon,* godfearing and virtuous men received the epithet 'son of God *(hyios Theou)*'.[8] The Israelites are also described as the sons or children of God *(ben Yahweh),*[9] and the nation of Israel is likewise called the firstborn son of God *(ben Yahweh).*[10] More significantly as regards the later use of the term in Christianity, King David, as the archetypal messianic figure, is described by God as His Son. As God says to David in the *Psalms,* "You are My son *(ben);* this day have I begotten you,"[11] and "He shall say to Me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.'"[12] Likewise, in *2 Samuel,* God says of David (through Nathan the prophet), "I will be his father, and he shall be My son *(ben).*"[13]

This epithet of the Messiah or Christ as the Son of God echoes throughout the gospels and Christian literature as 'Jesus the Christ, the Son of God *(Hyios tou Theou)*'.[14] As a consequence, partly as an epithet of the Messiah and partly as an expression for the incarnate Word, by the time the gospels had been written, late in the first century, the 'Son of God' was established as Jesus' title, second only to the 'Christ'. It appears throughout the four gospels, occasionally in the earlier letters of Paul,[15] and here and there in other New Testament texts.[16] When the angel informs Mary of Jesus' forthcoming birth, she is told that she will be giving birth to the Son of God.[17] In his temptation of Jesus, the devil addresses him as the Son of God.[18] Likewise, when Jesus casts out devils, they too call him the Son of God.[19] The disciples also recognize him as such,[20] and the matter of his divine Sonship forms an integral part of Jesus' trial,[21] crucifixion,[22] and later resurrection.[23] The expression is also used in various contexts, throughout John's gospel,[24] where the identification of the Word and the Only-begotten Son is implied.

Later Christians understood the primary truth that the Son of God was the "Word made flesh", that God had humbled Himself, becoming man for the sake of sinful human beings. As St Augustine (354–430) says:

> It is pride that is the cause of all our sickness, which the Son of God came to heal; he descended and was made humble. How then can man continue in his pride? God has been made humble for him. You are ashamed, perhaps, to imitate a humble man; so imitate the humble God. The Son of God came in a man and was made humble: that teaches you to be humble, it does not teach you to make man a beast. God Himself was made man; you, man, know that you are man: to know that is the whole of humility.
>
> *St Augustine, On John 25:16; cf. in OCM pp.155–56*

Or as Bernard of Clairvaux (*c.*1090–153) puts it:

> More obvious than the light of day is the immense sacrifice he has made for you, O man: he who was Lord became a slave, he who was

> rich became a pauper, the Word was made flesh, and the Son of God did not disdain to become the Son of Man.
>
> *Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs 11:7, WBC1 p.75*

In a world where everyday things such as the sun, the moon, thunderstorms, the weather, and disease seemed magical or supernatural, difficult to comprehend, and the product of divine or devilish influence, it is understandable that the incarnation of the Son of God as a human being should also be regarded as the result of divine intervention. It is from this kind of mindset that the belief in the virgin birth of Jesus as the Son of God originated. The fourteenth-century Walter Hilton expresses his belief and reasoning very clearly:

> If man's soul were to be reformed, and the effects of his sin repaired, it was necessary that the Lord God Himself should reform this image and make atonement for this sin, since man himself could not do it. But God could not do this in His divinity, for God could not and was not obliged to expiate man's sin by suffering pain in His divine nature. It was therefore necessary that God Himself should assume our sinful human nature and become man. But He could not do this by the normal process of human generation, for it was not possible for the Son of God to be born of any woman known by man.
>
> It was therefore necessary for Him to become man by a generation effected by the grace and operation of the Holy Spirit in a pure virgin, full of grace, our Lady Saint Mary. And so it was done. For our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man, and through His precious death and suffering for us, he made satisfaction to the heavenly Father for man's guilt. He had the power to do this because he was God, and owed nothing himself, except insofar as he was also man, born of the same race as Adam who first sinned. And so, although he owed no debt for Himself, because he could not sin, yet of his own free will he assumed the debt of man's sin, and in his infinite mercy took human nature for man's salvation.
>
> *Walter Hilton, Ladder of Perfection 2:2, LPH p.115*

The expression 'Son of God' as a metaphor for a master or saviour, is not unique to Christianity. It was also used in Manichaeism, usually for Jesus,[25] but occasionally for Mānī. It is Jesus, for example, who is being addressed when the devotee prays to be spiritually cleansed in the waters of the Word (the "Column of Glory"):

> O saviour, O Son of God, draw me quickly to yourself:
> wash me in the dews of the Column of Glory.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CLXXXII; cf. MPB p.103*

Similarly:

> The Son of the living God, the physician of souls –
> come, sing to him, the saviour of spirits.
> The Father who is in the Son, the Son who is in the Father.
> *Psalms of Heracleidēs, Manichaean Psalm Book, MPB p.193*

And a Parthian hymn, seemingly commemorating Mānī's birthday, begins:

> Blessed is this day above all days:
> the day on which the Son of God descended to earth.
> *Manichaean Hymns, MM3 p.884ff., RMP bl; cf. GSR p.58*

Mānī is regarded as a gnostic saviour, and although one of the most well known, he was not the only one held to have been a Son of God. The Christian heresiologist Irenaeus relates that Simon Magus, a Samaritan and contemporary of Jesus, was regarded by his disciples as a saviour and a Son of God.[26] Justin Martyr (*c.*100–165) says that Simon had a considerable following in his own time and even a century later was still worshipped as the "first God" by "almost all the Samaritans and a few even of other nations", particularly in Rome.[27]

The Son of God is also mentioned in a fragment, written in the Hebrew of that period, found at Qumran among the Dead Sea Scrolls. There it is prophesied that a messianic Son of God, "righteous in all his ways", will supplant the transient kingdoms of the world with an eternal rule of peace, but only after – with the help of God – making war upon and subduing other nations:

> He will be called Son of God *(barah di-El),* and they will call him Son of the Most High *(bar ʿlyon).* Like the appearance of shooting stars, so shall their kingdoms be. For a certain number of years, they will reign upon the earth, and will crush all. People will crush people, and nation will crush nation, until the people of God shall arise; then all will rest from the sword.
>
> His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and he will be righteous in all his ways. He will judge the earth in righteousness, and everyone will make peace. The sword shall cease from the earth, and every nation will bow down to him. As for the great God, with His help he will make war, and He will give all the peoples into his power; all of them He will throw down before him. His rule will be an eternal rule.
> *Qumran Fragment 4Q246, col.2; cf. CDSV p.618, DSSU pp.70–71*

Though the passage is related in content to the biblical *Daniel,* its dating and interpretation remain a matter of scholarly debate.

The Son of God as the Creative Word also appears in gnostic texts, both Christian[28] and non-Christian. As the non-Christian *Trimorphic Protennoia* says:

> Then the Son who is perfect in every respect –
> that is, the Word who originated through that Voice,
> who proceeded from the Height,
> who has within him the Name, who is a Light –
> He (the Son) revealed the everlasting things
> and all the unknowns were known.
>
> *Trimorphic Protennoia 37, NHS28 pp.406–7*

Son of God is also used as a metaphor in the Hermetic literature, where it is said that the "The light-giving Word, who comes from the Mind *(Nous),* is the Son of God."[29] In Greek literature, the divine *Nous,* the Mind or Intelligence of God, is used more or less synonymously with the Word. The Hermetic texts also say that the "Cosmos is the Son of God":

> God is father of the Cosmos *(Kosmos),* but the Cosmos is father of the things in the Cosmos; the Cosmos is the Son of God, and the things in the Cosmos are made by the Cosmos. It is rightly called 'cosmos' or 'arrangement', for it arranges all things in the diversity of generation, in the ceaselessness of life, in the tirelessness of activity, in the rapidity of necessity, in the associability of the elements, and in the order of things that come to be. That it should be called an 'arrangement', then, is necessary and fitting.
>
> *Hermetica 9:8, HGCH p.29*

The Greek *Kosmos* means 'order' or 'arrangement', and though it refers here to the world or universe, it implies that the creation is infused by the intelligence and order of God, and may thus be described as His progeny or "Son". As the same text says:

> The Cosmos . . . has sense and intelligence, . . . (but) the sense and intelligence of the Cosmos are occupied solely in making all things, and dissolving them again into itself. The Cosmos is an instrument of God's will.
>
> *Hermetica 9:5–6; cf. HAG p.75*

The dating of the Hermetic literature has always been a matter of debate, but is generally thought to have originated during the second and third centuries CE. The development of its language is thought to have probably been

independent of both the writings of Philo Judaeus and Christian doctrine, though its writers were no doubt aware of both.

See also: **Firstborn** (3.1), **Only-begotten Son** (3.1), **Son** (3.1), **Son of Man**, **sons of God** (▸4).

1. *1 Corinthians* 1:24, *KJV.*
2. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle* 36:7, *CWJC2* p.361.
3. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel* 2:15.4, *CWJC1* p.122; *Spiritual Canticle* 1:2, 3:3, 5:1, 36:7, *CWJC2* pp.187, 203, 210, 361.
4. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mount Carmel* 2:22.6, *CWJC1* p.165.
5. Philo Judaeus, *On Husbandry* 12; *cf. PCW3* pp.133–35, *TGH1* p.238; *On the Life of Moses* II:26.
6. *Deuteronomy* 13:13; *1 Kings* 21:10; *1 Samuel* 2:12, 25:17; *Judges* 19:22; *Psalms* 89:22.
7. *E.g. Job* 1:6, 2:1, 38:7; *Genesis* 6:2, 4.
8. *Wisdom of Solomon* 2:18, 5:5, 18:13.
9. *Deuteronomy* 14:1.
10. *Exodus* 4:22*ff.*
11. *Psalms* 2:7; *cf. KJV.*
12. *Psalms* 89:26; *cf. KJV.*
13. *2 Samuel* 7:14, *KJV.*
14. *E.g. Matthew* 16:16, 26:63; *John* 20:31.
15. *Romans* 1:4; *2 Corinthians* 1:19; *Galatians* 2:20; *Ephesians* 4:13.
16. *Acts* 8:37, 9:20; *Hebrews* 4:14, 6:6, 7:3, 10:29; *1 John* 3:8, 4:15, 5:5, 10, 13, 20; *Book of Revelation* 2:18.
17. *Luke* 1:35.
18. *Matthew* 4:6; *Luke* 4:3, 9.
19. *Mark* 3:11; *Matthew* 8:29; *Luke* 4:41.
20. *Matthew* 14:33.
21. *Matthew* 26:63; *Luke* 22:70; *John* 19:7.
22. *Mark* 15:39; *Matthew* 27:40, 43.
23. *Matthew* 27:54.
24. *John* 1:34, 3:18, 5:25, 9:35, 10:36, 11:4, 11:27, 20:31.
25. See also *e.g. Manichaean Psalm Book* CCL, CCLI, *MPB* pp.59–60.
26. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* I:XXIII, *AH1* p.86*ff.*
27. Justin Martyr, *First Apology* XXVI, *WJMA* p.29.
28. *E.g. Gospel of Truth* 37–40, *NHS22* pp.110–15.
29. *Hermetica* 1:6; *cf. HGCH* p.2.

son of greatness An epithet mostly used for Jesus in the Manichaean texts, where the Jesus referred to is generally his ascended, spiritual or light form, also

known as "Jesus the Splendour", regarded as one of the powers of salvation sent from the "Father of Greatness". As it says in a Manichaean hymn:

> We worship Jesus, the Lord, the son of greatness,
> who has sent you (Mānī), blessed one, to us.
> *Manichaean Hymns, MBB p.18ff., GSR p.137*

And:

> Reverence to you, son of greatness,
> who has liberated your righteous ones.
> *Manichaean Hymns, MM3 p.881ff., RMP bx; cf. GSR p.71, ML p.106*

Mānī is also occasionally given the same designation:

> May the Lord Jesus, the chief of the messengers,
> enrapture you in brightness, you strong ones!
> May the Lord Mānī, the son of greatness,
> strengthen you blessed ones with wisdom.
> *Manichaean Hymns, RMP dgb; cf. GSR p.128*

The epithet is also used for Jesus in the Manichaean *Kephalaia,* written in Coptic.[1]

See also: **Son**.

1. *Kephalaia* 1, 8, 38, *KOT* pp.18, 41–42, 105.

son of light, **son of mercy**, **son of perfect mercy**, **son of the king** Epithets of Jesus in Christian literature, being variants of his primary title, Son of God. In the *Acts of Thomas,* Judas Thomas addresses Jesus as the "son of mercy":

> Son of mercy, the Son that for love of man
> was sent to us from the perfect realm on high.
> *Acts of Thomas 156; cf. AAA p.288, ANT p.432*

And as the "Son of perfect mercy":

> O Jesus, son of perfect mercy, . . .
> O hidden one revealed in your works;
> Our nourisher and guardian;
> Giver of life to our bodies, and saviour of our souls.
> *Acts of Thomas 39; cf. ANT p.384, AAA p.180*

Elsewhere in the *Acts of Thomas,* Jesus is also described as the "son of light":

> Praise be to you, son of light,
> the Wisdom and the Power and the Knowledge,
> who exists in all ages. . . .
> Praise be to you, son of light,
> carried by the Spirit,
> and clothed in the light of the Father.
>
> *Acts of Thomas VIII; cf. AAA pp.245, 247*

In the hymns of Ephraim Syrus, Jesus is commonly addressed as the "son of the king". In the *Chaldaean Breviary,* the "son of the king" is the spiritual form of Jesus, who is said to make a place in heaven for the soul:

> In the holy of holies, which cannot be described,
> the son of the king has built for his bride
> a glorified bridechamber.
>
> *Chaldaean Breviary, BCB3 p.425; cf. in MEM p.116*

See also: **Son**, **sons of light** (▸4).

Son of Man (He. *ben adam, ben enosh, bar enosh,* Gk. *Hyios tou Anthrōpou*) A poetic expression for a human being, as in several books of the Hebrew Bible,[1] as well as the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other sources; also, the messianic figure in the visionary texts of *Daniel* and *1 Enoch;* also, Jesus, as the Messiah, in the New Testament and later Christian literature; also, in some gnostic texts, the archetypal, macrocosmic, primal, or cosmic Man.

The Son of Man as a messianic figure makes his first appearance in Daniel's vision of the four beasts. Here, he appears "with the clouds of heaven", and is given eternal dominion over the earth. The vision is later explained by the angel Gabriel to have been a vision of the "end of time":[2]

> I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man *(bar enosh)* came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days (God), and was presented before Him. And He gave him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, such that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; and his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom is one which shall not be destroyed.
>
> *Daniel 7:13–14; cf. KJV, RSV*

The apocalyptic pre-Christian text *1 Enoch,* a composite of several authors, written between the fifth and the first centuries BCE, follows suit. From

internal historical evidence, *Daniel* is thought to have been written *c.*165 BCE. The passages from *1 Enoch* that follow were probably written around the same time, though which of the two is the earlier is uncertain. In *1 Enoch,* the messiah, introduced as the "righteous one" or the "elect one", is later named the "Son of Man". He appears in the presence of God ("Lord of the Spirits" or "Ancient of Days"):

> And I beheld there the One who is the Ancient of Days, and His head was white like wool, and with Him was another being whose countenance was like that of a man. And his face was full of grace, like one of the holy angels. And I asked one of the angels who went with me, and who had showed me all the hidden things concerning that Son of Man, who he was, and where he had come from, and why he went with the Ancient of Days?
>
> And he answered me, and said: "This is the Son of Man to whom righteousness belongs, with whom righteousness dwells, and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is hidden: because the Lord of Spirits has chosen him; and his destiny is to surpass all before the Lord of Spirits in eternal uprightness.
>
> "This Son of Man whom you beheld shall remove the kings and the mighty from their seats, and the strong from their thrones, and shall loosen the reins of the strong, and break the teeth of the sinners."
>
> *1 Enoch 46:1–4; cf. BE pp.63–64, OTP1 p.34*

The text then goes on to describe the further downfall of kings and rulers, while the righteous are raised up into the presence of God. The Son of Man is also said to have existed with God before the creation was formed:

> And in that place I beheld the Fountain of Righteousness, which is inexhaustible, encircled by many springs of wisdom. And all the thirsty drank of them, and were filled with wisdom, and took their dwelling with the righteous and holy and elect. And at that hour, that Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, before the Ancient of Days. Even before the sun and the moon were created, before the stars of the heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits. He shall be as a staff for the righteous, for them to lean upon and not fall. He shall be the light of the nations, and the hope of those who are troubled in heart.
>
> *1 Enoch 48:1–4; cf. BE p.66, OTP1 p.35*

Here, the Son of Man is also named, but although it is later said that this name has been revealed to the earth, the seas, the stars, the moon, and all the heavenly bodies – "They are blessed, glorified, and exalted, because the

Name of the Son of Man had been revealed to them"[3] – it is not revealed to the reader, perhaps because it is the mystic Name, inexpressible in human language, by which all things are created and sustained.

The Son of Man is also said to have been concealed by God in His presence "from the beginning". Only when his ministry is to begin will he be revealed to the "holy and the elect":

> For from the beginning, the Son of Man existed in secret, and the Most High One preserved him in the presence of His Power; then He revealed him to the holy and the elect ones. The congregation of the holy ones shall be planted, and all the elect ones shall stand before him on that Day.
>
> *1 Enoch 62:7–8; cf. OTP1 p.43*

In the language of Jewish symbolism, the "holy ones" are the angels, and the "elect" or chosen are the righteous. In another passage, the Son of Man is again depicted seated on his throne of glory,[4] passing judgment on the Last Day, when the righteous will be admitted to everlasting life, while sinners are destroyed.[5]

Considering Christian usage of the term, there is no doubt that the apocalyptic language and imagery of *Daniel* and *1 Enoch* are reflected in the gospels, specifically in the apocalyptic portions of *Mark, Matthew,* and *Luke.*[6] Anyone at that time with a Jewish background would have been familiar with these books. In *Matthew,* Jesus says:

> When the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.[7]
>
> *Matthew 25:31–32; cf. KJV*

Not only are there the familiar themes from *1 Enoch* of the Son of Man, seated on the "throne of his glory", judging the "nations", but in imagery taken direct from *Daniel,* he is also said to come in the "clouds of heaven":

> And then the sign of the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* shall appear in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.[8]
>
> *Matthew 24:30; cf. KJV*

The gospel usage of the Son of Man as an epithet of Jesus is interesting. It appears no fewer than eighty-one times, the most frequent users being the

greatest lovers of apocalyptic passages, *Matthew* (thirty times) and *Mark* (twenty-five times). And remarkably – in the hands of the gospel writers – it is a title used only by Jesus in reference to himself. It never appears in any other context. Furthermore, it is absent from Paul's letters, and is rarely used by the early Greek fathers. Even later Christians have used the term mainly when quoting passages from the gospels where the Son of Man is used. The reason may be due to a confusion over the Greek, which could mean 'the son of *the* man' rather than the 'son of man'. Scholars are agreed that the latter is the correct translation, but the early Greek writers may have preferred to have avoided the use of the term altogether, to prevent ambiguity with an expression that could be interpreted as counter to the doctrine of the virgin birth.

Apart from the appearance of the term in apocalyptic contexts, the Son of Man is used in other places that help elucidate Jesus' role on earth, and incidentally, of all masters who are incarnations of the Word. Explaining the parable of the sower, for instance, Jesus says that the Son of Man is the sower of the divine Word: "The seed is the Word *(Logos)* of God,"[9] and "He that sows the good seed is the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou).*"[10]

Again, introducing the parable of the lost sheep, in which the shepherd seeks out the one who has gone astray, Jesus says that "The Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* is come to save that which was lost,"[11] meaning that having sown the seed of the Word, he will not leave his allotted sheep[12] until they have all been restored to eternal life. Having initiated a disciple he is responsible for the return of the soul to God.

He also says that he has not come to be served, but to serve his "many" disciples. And more than that, he will stand as a "ransom" for their sins:

> The Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
>
> *Matthew 20:28; cf. KJV; cf. Mark 10:45*

This "ransom" implies the forgiveness of sins, which can result in ill health and sickness. As he says to a paralysed man

> For which is easier – to say, "Your sins are forgiven you," or to say, "Arise, and walk"? But that you may know that the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* has power on earth to forgive sins; then said he to the paralysed man, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your home."[13]
>
> *Matthew 9:5–6; cf. KJV*

Therefore, summarizing his teaching, Jesus advises his disciples to "labour" at their spiritual practice and in developing their spiritual life, for only that is truly lasting:

> Labour not for the meat that perishes, but for that meat which endures unto eternal life, which the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou)* shall give unto you; for on him has God the Father set his seal.
>
> *John 6:27; cf. KJV, RSV*

In fact, he adds elsewhere that all sins – even speaking ill of the Son of Man – can be forgiven except turning one's back on spiritual practice, for that is the primary means by which a master can help his disciples:

> Therefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of Man *(Hyios tou Anthrōpou),* it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaks against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.
>
> *Matthew 12:31–32; cf. KJV; cf. Luke 12:10*

Among Christian writers, the expression is commonly associated with the fact that the "Word was made flesh", becoming a human being in the form of Jesus. God, as the Word, came to the human level, humbly adopting the guise of a man in order to communicate with human beings. As the unknown writer of the *Odes of Solomon* says:

> The habitation of the Word is a Son of Man,
> and its truth is love.
> Blessed are they who by means of him
> have understood everything,
> and have known the Lord in His Truth.
>
> *Odes of Solomon 12:12–13, OSD p.60*

Among the later Greek fathers, Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022) expresses this succinctly:

> What is the purpose of the incarnation of the divine *Logos,* which is proclaimed throughout the scriptures, about which we read and which yet we do not recognize? Surely it is that he has shared in what is ours, so as to make us participants of what is his. For the Son of God became the Son of Man in order to make us human beings sons of God, raising us up by grace to what he is by nature; giving us a new birth in the Holy Spirit and leading us directly into the kingdom of heaven. Or, rather, he gives us the grace to possess this kingdom of heaven. Or, rather, he gives us the grace to possess this kingdom within ourselves,[14] so

> that not merely do we hope to enter it but, being in full possession of it, we can affirm: "Our life is hid with Christ in God."[15]
>
> *Symeon the New Theologian, Theological Texts 108, Philokalia, PCT4 p.48*

Maximos the Confessor similarly says that God became the Son of Man, so that human beings can become sons of God:

> If the divine *Logos* of God the Father became Son of Man and man, so that He might make men gods and the sons of God, let us believe that we shall reach the realm where Christ Himself now is; for He is the head of the whole body,[16] and endued with our humanity has gone to the Father as forerunner on our behalf.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Theology 2:25, Philokalia, PCT2 p.143*

In Manichaean literature, Jesus is again depicted as the Son of Man,[17] including the Manichaean account of Jesus' death and suffering.[18] Among other gnostic groups, the Son of Man was also used not only for Jesus, either generally or for the incarnated Word, but also as a term for the archetypal, macrocosmic, primal or cosmic Man, an image that appears in most mystical traditions. In this context, the perfect saviour is the 'Son of the Son of Man' – the Son or emanation of the cosmic Man, the perfect microcosm emanated or reflected from the macrocosm.[19]

See also: **chosen one**.

1. *Numbers* 23:19; *Isaiah* 56:2; *Psalms* 80:17; *Ezekiel* 2:1, *passim* (more than 90 times); *Daniel* 8:17.
2. *Daniel* 8:17.
3. *1 Enoch* 69:26; *cf. OTP1* p.49.
4. *1 Enoch* 62:5, 69:29, *OTP1* pp.43, 49.
5. *1 Enoch* 69:27–29.
6. *Matthew* 24:2–31, 25:31–46; *Mark* 13:4–7; *Luke* 21:7–29.
7. See also *Matthew* 19:28; *Mark* 14:62.
8. See also *Matthew* 26:64; *Luke* 21:27; *Mark* 13:26, 14:62.
9. *Luke* 8:11, *KJV.*
10. *Matthew* 13:37; *cf. KJV.*
11. *Matthew* 18:11; *cf. Luke* 19:10.
12. *Cf. John* 10:3–4, 14–16, 26–28.
13. *Cf. Mark* 2:9–11; *Luke* 5:24.
14. *Cf. Luke* 17:21.
15. *Colossians* 3:3.
16. *Cf. Colossians* 1:18.

17. *E.g. Manichaean Psalm Book* CCLXVIII, *MPB* pp.86, 162, 178.
18. *Manichaean Text, MM3* p.882*ff., RMP* by, *GSR* p.71; *CEUI* (M4570) 76*ff.,* p.390*ff., RMP* byb, *GSR* pp.72–73, *ML* p.101.
19. *E.g. Eugnostos the Blessed (NHS27); Sophia of Jesus Christ (NHS27); Naassene Document,* in *Refutation of All Heresies* V:2, *RAH* p.136.

sons of light, **sons of salvation** Powers of salvation emanated by the Father in Manichaean and Mandaean cosmogonies. In the Manichaean texts, the Father emanates a number of saviours, powers of light, who are sent to rescue the light that has fallen into the realm of darkness (this world). They are known as the "brethren" and the "sons of light". One of the Coptic *Psalms of Thomas,* translated and adapted from earlier Mandaean texts, relates the story of how part of the divine Light came into the realm of darkness and was captured:

> A part therefore went forth from My robe:
> it went, it lightened their darkness;
> My sweet Fragrance went, it sweetened their stink;
> My brethren, the sons of light, went forth:
> they brought peace to their land.
> *Psalms of Thomas, Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.205*

The light, having been captured by the forces of darkness, then looks to God and the "sons of light" for salvation:

> I was therefore looking towards my Father,
> that He might send help;
> Looking towards my brethren, the sons of light,
> that they might come, tracking me.
> My Father therefore sent help to me,
> my brethren arose, they became one with me.
> *Psalms of Thomas, Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.205*

Other Manichaean texts number these sons of light as five.[1] In Mandaean texts, there are said to be four such "sons of light" or "sons of salvation". They sit (metaphorically) in the presence of the mythical Mandaean saviour, *Manda-ḍ-Hiia* ('*Gnōsis* of Life'):

> Blessed be your name
> and praised be your name, my Lord, *Manda-ḍ-Hiia.*...
> Sons of salvation who sit in your company
> have blessed you.
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 116; cf. CPM p.112*

They are angelic beings of light or *'uthras,* whose "Cry" (the divine music of the Word or Voice of God) fills all realms of creation:

> Four *'uthras,* sons of light, utter a Cry,
> which resounds in all the worlds.
> *Alma Rishaia Rba 7:564–65; cf. PNC p.44*

In other contexts, the sons of light are the followers of a master, especially in Christian and gnostic texts, and those from the Dead Sea Scrolls. In Mandaean texts, a general epithet for all *'uthras* is 'sons of light'.

See also: **Son**, **son of light**, **sons of light** (▸4).

1. *E.g. Manichaean Psalm Book, MPB* p.141.

soothsayer A person who can predict the future, especially by clairvoyant powers or divination; an augur, a diviner, a clairvoyant; a gift or profession mentioned in the earliest literature, often in a disparaging manner, clearly open to charlatans, and probably present in all cultures, literate or otherwise. A diviner is one who reads signs, omens and portents from divining aids such as cards, sticks, the stars and planets, or – especially in ancient times – the behaviour of birds and animals or an examination of their entrails (haruspication). Practically any thing or any event can be interpreted as a sign of something or another. The art is mentioned in the Bible,[1] in Greek and Roman literature, in Mesopotamian texts, in gnostic literature, by early Christian writers, by the Mayans, in all Eastern countries, and in many native cultures, *etc.*

See also: **clairvoyance** (7.3), **psychic experience** (7.3), **seer**, **visionary**.

1. *E.g. Deuteronomy* 18:10–11; *Exodus* 22:18; *Leviticus* 19:31; 20:27; *Daniel* 2:27, 4:7, 5:7, 11; *Isaiah* 2:6, 8:19; *Jeremiah* 27:9, 29:8; *Joshua* 13:22; *Micah* 5:12; *1 Samuel* 28:3, 9.

sovereign, **sovereign of the Light**, **sovereign of the religion** In most mystical or religious contexts, usually God, occasionally the divine Word, and sometimes Christ; in Manichaean literature, usually the saviour or master.

A Manichaean hymn in Parthian speaks of the saviour as the giver of the "white Sign", the pure Word of God, the mystic emblem or badge of office worn (metaphorically) by all mystic kings and given "as a gift" to his initiates. The diadem on the forehead symbolizes spirituality, while the banner is that of love:

You are the sovereign who gives, as a gift,
the diadem, the banner, and the white Sign.
You, you are the compassionate sovereign,
show me also compassion and pity.
Manichaean Hymns, MM3 p.883, RMP bk; cf. GSR p.58, ML pp.138–39

Another Parthian hymn, probably written by Mānī's trusted disciple Mar Ammo, expresses the joy of coming into the fold of the "beneficent sovereign":

How fortunate for us that, through you,
we received your Holy Word.
Beneficent sovereign, have mercy upon us!
The envoy of the Father heals spirits,
gives joy to all, and removes sorrows.
Manichaean Hymns, Huyadagmān I:1–2; cf. GSR p.100, MHCP pp.66–67

Another hymn similarly praises the saviour:

May increased blessings be upon you,
teacher of the Good Name,
you who are seated on the throne of the prophets....
You are the head and the leader,
a worthy heir to the throne,...
a merciful father and loving mother.
You lovingly encourage us,
and lead us into the joyful life of the blessed.
You are the Lord and blessed sovereign,
the bestower of all virtues
to the children who long for you.
Manichaean Hymns, MM2 p.323ff., RMP cm; cf. GSR p.92, ML pp.29–31

Centuries later and several thousand miles away, the same epithet is used by Shakespeare in one of his enigmatic sonnets. Scholars remain undecided as to whom these sonnets were addressed. The language of his sonnets, however, is completely in accordance with that of the mystical devotee longing to see his master, within or without. Certainly, no worldly beloved is worthy of the praise bestowed upon him or her in these sonnets, and Shakespeare is not given to senseless hyperbole:

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend
Nor services to do, till you require:

> Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour
> Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
> Nor think the bitterness of absence sour,
> When you have bid your servant once adieu:
> Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
> Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
> But like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
> Save, where you are, how happy you make those.
> So true a fool is love, that in your will,
> Though you do anything, he thinks no ill.
>
> *William Shakespeare, Sonnet 57*

See also: **Sovereign** (2.1).

sower A person who sows seed; mystically, the master, one who sows the seed of the Word, as in Jesus' well-known parable of the sower. The epithet appears during the Christian era, drawn from the gospel parable,[1] which occurs first in *Mark,* and is then retold in *Matthew* and *Luke.* Interestingly, while Luke, following Mark, is explicit: "The seed is the Word *(Logos)* of God,"[2] Matthew paraphrases, turning the divine *Logos* into hearing the "word *(logos)*" or teachings of Jesus[3] – an apt example of how Jesus' teachings got modified according to the understanding of those transmitting them.

Although the gospel explanations do not say so, it is generally presumed that the sower was Jesus. Understanding a number of such parables in this way, the fourth-century Persian Christian, Aphrahat, quoting a passage from *Isaiah* concerning the divine Word,[4] describes Jesus as the sower of the Word,[5] and in another place as "the good shepherd, the door, the way, the vine, the sower, the bridegroom, the pearl, the lamp, the Light, the king, God, saviour, and redeemer".[6]

The epithet also makes an occasional appearance in Manichaean texts. A fragmentary piece that speaks of the Holy Ghost who, "time after time . . . proclaimed his greatness through the mouth of the primeval prophets" – a number of whom are then mentioned – goes on to add "until [. . .], and he was a sower of the True Seed." Who is named, however, has succumbed to the ravages of time and a lacuna in the manuscript, though from the context, it is probably Mānī.[7]

See also: **planted in heaven** (7.4), **Seed** (3.1), **sowing of the Seed** (7.4).

1. *Mark* 4:3–8, 14–20; *Matthew* 13:3–9, 18–23; *Luke* 8:5–15.
2. *Luke* 8:11, *KJV; cf. Mark* 4:14.
3. *Matthew* 13:19.
4. *Isaiah* 55:10–11.

5. Aphrahat the Persian Sage, *Demonstrations* 8:15, *HEDA* p.380.
6. Aphrahat the Persian Sage, *Demonstrations* 20:11, *HEDA* p.392.
7. *Manichaean Text, MH* pp.27–28, *HMV* p.344; *cf. ML* p.12.

spiritual director, **director of souls** One who gives private spiritual direction or guidance to another, especially in the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. In Catholicism, a spiritual director is generally the priest in the confessional, whose role is to absolve or retain the sins confessed, to administer appropriate penance, and to counsel and direct the penitent on ethical, moral, and religious issues. For more spiritually advanced penitents who seek mystical perfection in the Christian way, the spiritual director is also a guide on the path of interior prayer and contemplation. It is axiomatic that such a director should have personal experience of the inner life in order that he may provide wise, informed, and individually oriented supervision. Different guidance is regarded as appropriate for solitaries, contemplatives and those leading active lives, as well as for each individual.

A fundamental principle of Catholic religious life is obedience to the confessor, the spiritual director, and – for those who have taken monastic vows – to the rule of their order. To seek God in obedience to one's own personal notions is hence regarded as worse than folly. As summarized by John Cassian (*c.*360–435), a monk of southern France who spent many years among the desert fathers of Egypt and introduced the rules of Eastern monasticism into the West: "By no vice does the devil draw a monk headlong and bring him to death sooner than by persuading him to neglect the counsel of the elders and trust to his own judgment and determination."[1]

Even so, a number of Christian mystics have written of the need to find a spiritual director who has understanding and experience of the path of inner prayer. John of the Cross speaks at some length and with great concern about spiritual directors who know little of the inner life, and provide inappropriate instruction to contemplative souls. Some, he says, hinder such souls by advising the practice of "elementary spiritual exercises" involving meditative reasoning and the active use of imagination concerning matters of the Christian faith, which actually activate the mind, and take the soul away from contemplation upon God.[2] Contrasting such practices with "quiet contemplation", when the mind is still and silent, he continues:

> Since God has no form or figure, the memory is safe if it be voided of form or figure; . . . for, the more it leans upon the imagination, the farther it is going from God, . . . since God is incomprehensible and therefore cannot be contained in the imagination.
>
> These spiritual directors such as we have been describing fail to understand souls that are now walking in this solitary and quiet

> contemplation, because they themselves have not arrived so far, nor learned what it means to leave behind the discursive reasoning of meditations, . . . and they think that these souls are idle. And therefore they disturb and impede the peace of this quiet and hushed contemplation, which God has been giving their penitents by His own power, and they cause them to follow the road of meditation and imaginative reasoning and make them perform interior acts, wherein the aforementioned souls find great repugnance, aridity and distraction, since they would fain remain in their holy rest and their quiet and peaceful state of recollection. . . .
>
> Such persons have no knowledge of what is spirituality. They offer a great insult and great irreverence to God by laying their coarse hands where God is working. . . . These spiritual directors will not let the soul have repose or quiet, but demand that it shall continually labour and work, that it may leave no room for God to work. . . .
>
> But, it may possibly be said, these directors err with good intent, through insufficiency of knowledge. This, however, does not excuse them for the advice which they are rash enough to give without first learning to understand either the way that the soul is taking or its spirit. Not understanding this, they are laying their coarse hands upon things that they understand not, instead of leaving them for those who are able to understand them; for it is a thing of no small weight, and no slight crime, to cause the soul to lose inestimable blessings and sometimes to leave it, completely corrupted by rash counsel. . . .
>
> For not all directors have sufficient knowledge to meet all the possibilities and cases which they encounter on the spiritual road, neither is their spirituality so perfect that they know how a soul has to be led and guided and directed in every state of the spiritual life.
>
> *John of the Cross, Living Flame of Love 3:52–57, CWJC3 pp.171–73*

John of the Cross goes on to rail at those spiritual directors who "behave like a husband who is jealous of his wife" if such a soul should seek counsel from another spiritual director. In fact, he says, when a director realizes that he is himself insufficiently advanced to help a soul, he "should himself advise a change, since any other advice springs from foolish pride and presumption, or from some other pretension".[3]

Teresa of Ávila also writes of the necessity of an experienced director, and of the harm that can be caused by inadequate guidance:

> The beginner needs counsel to help him ascertain what benefits him most. To this end a director is very necessary; but he must be a man of experience, or he will make a great many mistakes and lead souls along without understanding them or without allowing them to learn

> to understand themselves; for the soul, knowing that it is a great merit to be subject to its director, dares not do other than what he commands it. I have come across souls so constrained and afflicted because of the inexperience of their director that I have been really sorry for them. And I have found some who had no idea how to act for themselves; for directors who cannot understand spirituality afflict their penitents both in soul and in body, and prevent them from making progress. One person who spoke to me about this had been kept in bondage by her director for eight years; he would not allow her to aim at anything but self-knowledge, yet the Lord was already granting her the prayer of quiet, so she was suffering great trials.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Life 13, CWTA1 pp.79–80*

In the Orthodox tradition, an experienced spiritual director or guide, generally known as a *staretz* (elder), is again regarded as essential to spiritual progress. Though to take on the work of a spiritual director is no small matter, Neilos the Ascetic points out that most monks seek the status of such a role, without possessing the necessary spiritual qualifications:

> To become a true monk a man should not work backwards from the end to the beginning, but start at the beginning and so advance towards perfection. In this way, he will himself gain what he seeks, and will also be able to guide his disciples to holiness.
>
> Most people, however, without exerting any effort or making any real progress, small or great, in the practice of virtue, simply chase after the status of spiritual director, not realizing how dangerous this is. When others urge them to undertake the work of teaching, they do not refuse; indeed, they even wander about the back streets, recruiting anyone they find, and they promise all kinds of benefits as if making a contract with servants about food and clothing.
>
> Spiritual directors of this kind like to appear in public supported by a large crowd of attendants, and to have all the outward pomp of an abbot, as if playing a part on the stage. So as not to lose the services of their disciples, they are forced to keep on gratifying their whims. They are like a charioteer who drops the reins, and lets his horses go where they like. Their disciples are allowed to run wild: carried away by their desires, they fall over precipices or stumble at every obstacle in their path, because there is no one to stop them or to restrain their disordered impulses.
>
> *Neilos the Ascetic, Ascetic Discourse, Philokalia; cf. PCT1 pp.222–23*

Part of the role of a spiritual director is to teach the practice of inner prayer. Almost everyone, writes François de Sales, has the potential for this kind of prayer, as long as they are adequately guided:

> Not everyone has the gift of mental prayer; nevertheless, there is no doubt that nearly all, even the most stupid, are capable of acquiring this gift, provided that they have a good spiritual director, and are prepared to give it the attention it deserves.
>
> *François de Sales, Devout Life 5:17, IDL p.259*

The "best directors", writes the Abbé de Tourville, are those who look to the individual needs and temperament of those they instruct, and do not unthinkingly apply the same system to everyone:

> The best directors are not those who are tied to any system, but those whose aim is to direct, help, and further each soul according to its own nature. For God never makes any two souls exactly alike.
>
> *Abbé de Tourville, Letters of Direction 6, LDT p.41*

Ultimately, however wise and experienced a spiritual director may be, he can only advise from the outside. The true spiritual guide of the soul is the divine inner power:

> Our Lord watches over His own. Those who seek Him always find, under one form or another, all that they need for the wise guidance of their souls. It is above all in this form of blessing that God manifests Himself. . . .
>
> I have constantly experienced that in my own case – in the most diverse and unforeseen circumstances. I have always found our Lord providing, in the nick of time, that which is best for the training of the soul. Always have absolute confidence in this. . . .
>
> As soon as we become observant, we see at once that our Lord is our true and chief director, who, without our knowledge, has arranged matters in such a way that our lives turn out quite differently from what we should have expected; infinitely better for our salvation and glory than we should ever have dared to hope.
>
> *Abbé de Tourville, Letters of Direction 14, LDT pp.76–77*

Or as Bernard of Clairvaux observes, God is active in the soul through the Holy Spirit, whom he describes as "this heaven-sent Director".[4]

See also: **guide**, **staretz**.

1. John Cassian, *Confessions of Abbot Moses,* in "spiritual direction," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1909).
2. John of the Cross, *Living Flame of Love* 43–62, *CWJC3* pp.165–75.
3. John of the Cross, *Living Flame of Love* 3:59, 61, *CWJC3* pp.174–75.
4. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs* 17:2, *WBC1* p.127.

sprul sku (T) *Lit.* body *(sku)* of manifestation *(sprul);* emanation body, manifestation body; the recognized incarnation of a Tibetan *lama* who is found, generally in childhood, and is raised to inherit the position of his predecessor; phonetically rendered and more commonly romanized as *tulku.* See **tulku**.

srotāpanna (S), **sotāpanna** (Pa), **rgyun du zhugs pa** (T), **xūtuóhuán** (C), **shudaon** (J) *Lit.* one *(pa)* who has entered *(āpanna, zhugs)* into *(du)* the stream *(srotas, rgyun);* stream-enterer, stream-winner; relates to a metaphor referring to the noble eightfold path as a stream;[1] a noble disciple (Pa. *ariya-puggala*) who has just begun the search for spiritual realization; one who has entered the stream that leads to enlightenment (S. *nirvāṇa,* Pa. *nibbāna*), and has overcome the first three of the ten fetters *(saṃyojanas);* one who has entered the first of the four stages that lead to the attainment of *nibbāna.* In *Theravāda,* a *sotāpanna* is traditionally assured of attaining *nibbāna* in seven lives at the most *(sattakkhattu-parama).*

The Buddhist path is understood as being comprised of two stages – a mundane (Pa. *lokiya*) or preparatory stage and a supramundane (Pa. *lokuttara*) or transcendental, more mystical stage. The eyes of ordinary worldly people *(puthujjana)* are obscured by the dust of defilement and delusion; they see only the surface of things and are subject to a relentless cycle of death and rebirth *(saṃsāra).* The mundane *(lokiya)* stage of the path begins when the seeker sets out to develop virtue, concentration and wisdom, and culminates when these qualities have been developed to such a degree that he sees the three primary characteristics of mundane existence as they really are – impermanence *(anicca),* suffering *(dukkha),* and having no permanent, unchanging self or personal identity *(anatta).*

The seeker is now ready to embark upon the supramundane *(lokuttara)* stage of the journey, leading ultimately to *nibbāna.* At this point, he is said to have entered the 'stream' that leads to *nibbāna,* and is hence known as a stream-enterer *(sotāpanna).* Travellers on this supramundane path are those whose have attained a higher spiritual wisdom and who, through an evolved level of consciousness, perceive something of the extra-ordinary Reality that transcends the world of mind and body.

According to Buddhist philosophy, ten fetters *(saṃyojana)* hold beings to the wheel of birth and death. The first five create bondage to the material world; the remaining five result in bondage to the finer, higher, or heavenly worlds. To attain *nibbāna* all ten must be surmounted.

The five lower fetters are belief in the illusion of a personal self *(sakkāya-diṭṭhi),* doubt *(vicikicchā)* concerning the Buddha and his doctrines, clinging to the practice of rituals *(sīlabbata-parāmāsa),* sensual craving *(kāmarāga),* and ill will or resentment *(vyāpāda, dosa).* The *sotāpanna* is described

as someone who has overcome the first three fetters, and is on the way to overcoming the other two.

The five higher fetters are craving for existence in the world of (subtle) form (*rūparāga,* desire for form), craving for existence in the formless world *(arūparāga),* conceit *(māna),* restlessness *(uddhacca),* and ignorance *(avijjā).*

The breakthrough to the transcendental is achieved in four stages, each of which is subdivided into two phases: the path *(magga)* to that stage and its fruition *(phala).* On the path to each stage, the particular fetters that create bondage to *saṃsāra* and its round of death and rebirth are gradually surmounted. When the work required for the accomplishment of a particular path is complete, the seeker realizes its corresponding fruit, which is the degree of liberation accompanying that realization. There are thus four pairs or eight phases in all:

1. Realizing the path of stream-entry *(sotāpatti-magga).*
2. Realizing the fruition of stream-entry *(sotāpatti-phala).*

3. Realizing the path of once-return *(sakadāgāmī-magga).*
4. Realizing the fruition of once-return *(sakadāgāmī-phala).*

5. Realizing the path of non-return *(anāgāmī-magga).*
6. Realizing the fruition of non-return *(anāgāmī-phala).*

7. Realizing the path of holiness *(arahatta-magga).*
8. Realizing the fruition of holiness *(arahatta-phala)*

Thus the path of stream-entry *(sotāpatti)* culminates in its fruition. This is the completion of the first stage.

At the second stage, one becomes a once-returner *(sakadāgāmī).* Here, the fourth and fifth lower fetters are greatly weakened. Reaching this stage, the traveller will attain *nibbāna* after one more rebirth.

At the third stage, one becomes a non-returner *(anāgāmī),* in whom the fourth and fifth fetters have been completely destroyed. In such a person, all attachments to this world have ceased, and at death one will be reborn in a higher world, in one of the pure abodes, from where one attains *nibbāna* without returning to this world.

Finally, at the fourth stage, one becomes an *arahanta* or *ariya* (worthy one) by destruction of the five higher fetters. Such a one has completed the task and will attain final *nibbāna* at death.[2]

The Pali texts vary to some extent in their description of these stages. According to a passage in the *Anguttara Nikāya,* whatever may happen to a stream-enterer, having once overcome the first three fetters, he will never again take birth in animal or lower forms, nor as a ghost, nor in hellish realms.

Moreover, he will take no more than seven, or two or three, or only one more birth before attaining enlightenment:

> If a man, after the disappearance of the three fetters, has entered the stream, he is no longer subject to rebirth in lower worlds, and is firmly established, destined for full enlightenment. Having passed among heavenly and human beings only seven more times in the round of rebirths, his suffering comes to an end. Such a man is called 'one with seven births at the most *(sattakkhattu-parama)*'.
>
> If a man, after the disappearance of the three fetters . . ., is destined for full enlightenment, having passed among noble families two or three times in the round of rebirths, his suffering comes to an end. Such a man is called 'one passing from one noble family to another *(kolankola)*'.
>
> If a man, after the disappearance of the three fetters . . ., is destined for full enlightenment, having returned to human existence only once more, his suffering comes to an end. Such a man is called 'one germinating only once more *(eka-bījī)*'.
>
> *Anguttara Nikāya 3:87, PTSA1 p.233; cf. in "Sotāpanna," PBD*

Two classes of individuals enter the first stage, the stage of stream-entry:

1. *Dhamma*-followers *(dhammānusārin),* in whom the faculty of wisdom *(paññindriya)* is predominant, and who develop the noble path with wisdom in the lead; and

2. Faith-followers *(saddhānusārin),* seekers in whom the faculty of faith *(saddhindriya)* is predominant and who develop the noble path with faith in the lead.

These two types form the basis of a separate sevenfold classification.

Entry upon the path of stream-entry is significant, for once having entered, progress towards the stage of an *arahanta* is irresistible. It marks the point of no return – the upward pull of the Unconditioned *(i.e. nibbāna)* at this point becomes stronger than the gravitational pull of *saṃsāra,* and the attainment of *nibbāna* becomes inevitable. That is why the Buddha says that simply entering the stream *(sotāpatti)* is superior to dominion over all the worlds in creation, because once entered, it will ultimately bear the final fruit *(phala)* of enlightenment:

> Better than sole dominion over the earth, better than going to heaven,
> better even than lordship over all the worlds
> is the fruit of stream-entry *(sotāpatti-phala).*
>
> *Dhammapada 13:12; cf. DPN*

See also: **arhat**, **sotāpattiyanga** (▸4).

1. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 55:5, *Sāriputta Sutta, PTSS5* pp.347–48.
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* 22, *Alagaddūpama Sutta, PTSM1* pp.141–42.

standing one One who lives or one who exists, since only a living person can stand up; one who has been appointed; the existing one, the living one; a living master, saviour, or Christ.

The term appears in the Judaeo-Christian *Clementine Recognitions* and the *Clementine Homilies* for the living master or true prophet. In an interesting, though brief, dissertation on the history of Simon Magus, said to have been a successor to John the Baptist, the writer says that Simon "wishes himself . . . to be thought the Christ, and to be called the standing one".[1]

According to the *Clementine Recognitions,* Simon Magus is involved in a dispute with a certain Dositheus, also a disciple of John the Baptist, over who was John the Baptist's rightful successor and the standing one. Sadly, the facts of the matter are impossible to determine, especially since the writer is expressly anti-Simon in his sympathies, writing derogatively of him at all times. That Simon is always portrayed as a sorcerer or magician is itself defamatory, a magician being regarded as inferior to a true holy man or mystic. Whatever the facts of the matter, the controversy was clearly over who was a true and living master, and the true successor to John the Baptist.

According to the version of events narrated in the *Clementine Homilies,* after the execution of John the Baptist, Simon goes to Egypt "for the study of magic". Meanwhile, Dositheus takes advantage of his absence to proclaim himself the standing one. When Simon returns, although he knows that Dositheus has over-reached himself, he takes his place among the disciples:

> Taking his place after a few days among the thirty fellow disciples, he began to denigrate Dositheus for not delivering the instructions correctly. Simon said that Dositheus was doing this, not through unwillingness to deliver them correctly, but through ignorance. On one occasion, Dositheus – perceiving that these artful criticisms of Simon were undermining the opinion which many had held of him, such that they no longer considered him to be the standing one – came in a rage to the usual meeting place, and finding Simon there, struck him with a staff. But the staff seemed to pass through Simon's body as if he had been smoke. Thereupon Dositheus, being confounded, said to him, "If you are the standing one, I also will worship you." When Simon said that he was indeed, Dositheus, knowing that he himself was not the standing one, fell down and worshipped him, and after consultation with the twenty-nine leaders, raised Simon to the place

> of honour. Not many days after, Dositheus himself, while he (Simon) was standing there, fell down and died.
>
> *Clementine Homilies II:24; cf. CH p.43*

See also: **living one**.

1. *Clementine Recognitions* II:7; *cf. CR* p.196.

staretz (Slavonic) (pl. *startsy*) (Gk. *gerōn*) *Lit.* old man, elder; sometimes anglicized as 'starets'; a translation of the Greek *gerōn;* in the Orthodox Church, a monastic spiritual guide; a monk, distinguished by his holiness, who has already achieved much on the spiritual path, and whose own personal experience has brought him wisdom and the gift of being able to guide others. In a monastery, novices are attached to a *staretz,* who trains and guides them on the spiritual path. Lay people, also, often resort to a *staretz* for spiritual guidance.

The Orthodox monastic movement traces its descent to the early desert fathers. The earliest-known *gerōn* is Antony the Great (251–356), regarded as the father of Christian monasticism. It is clear, however, that he was by no means the first Christian ascetic, and was also preceded by many desert-dwelling ascetics of other religious persuasions. The son of wealthy landowners, at the age of eighteen, Antony inherited the estate upon the death of his parents. Taking to heart the words of Jesus, as recorded in *Matthew,*[1] he gave away part of his estate to neighbours, and sold the remainder, giving the proceeds to the poor. After some time, he retired to the Egyptian desert to lead the life of a hermit, where it is said that he endured great trials and temptations. With the passage of time, however, as the news of his holiness spread abroad, he found himself the centre of a stream of visitors from throughout the Roman Empire. His reputation as the father of Christian monasticism may therefore be justified by the inspiration he gave to the many hundreds of Christian ascetics who came to join him in the wilderness, and for whom some form of loose-knit organization was required.

The Eastern monastic movement, always primarily mystical, aims at the experience of God in this life. To this end, a personal relationship between disciple and *gerōn* was a fundamental aspect of fourth- and fifth-century monasticism, which flourished throughout Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Likewise, in monasteries during the Byzantine period (C4th–15th) – which from the very beginning had adopted Christianity as the religion of the empire – the *gerōn,* who were not usually ordained as priests, often took confession, and became the spiritual guides of the congregation, under the overall authority of the abbot.

As time passed, the Byzantine traditions crossed over into Russia and the Slavonic states, where the same mystical understanding and its various

practices were kept alive by the tradition of the *staretz* and disciple. Among the more well-known *startsy* were Sergius of Radonezh (*c.*1314–1392) and Nil Sorsky (1433–1508). Two to three centuries later, the tradition received a further impetus when the *staretz* Paissy Velitchkovsky (1722–1794) translated into Old Slavonic a collection of Greek monastic and wisdom texts known as the *Philokalia.* The movement, which became known as *starchestvo* ('staretsism'), was given further direction by Seraphim of Sarov (1759–1833) and the *staretz* of the monastery of Optina Pustyn, upon whom Dostoyevsky modelled Zossima in *The Brothers Karamazov.* It can hardly have been coincidental that this revival of interest in staretsism coincided with the rise of the popular Jewish Hasidic movement that started in Poland with the Baʿal Shem Tov (*c.*1700–1760), towards the end of the eighteenth century.

At a time when Christianity seemed to many to be little more than a formalized institution, staretsism brought a return of true spiritual wisdom, influencing many, including such writers and intellectuals as Khomyakov (1804–1860), Gogol (1809–1852), Solovyov (1853–1900), and Tolstoy (1828–1910).

Though not the only form of inner prayer in the Orthodox Church, the standard practice known to centuries of Eastern Christians is the Jesus prayer, also known as the prayer of the heart and the invocation of the Name. It consists of the repetition of the short prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me," or some longer or shorter variant, sometimes in association with breathing or other exercises. Though simple to practice, for anyone intending in making the prayer the basis of extensive spiritual practice, a *staretz* is essential:

> The invocation of the Name is a prayer of utmost simplicity, accessible to every Christian, but it leads at the same time to the deepest mysteries of contemplation. Anyone proposing to say the Jesus prayer for lengthy periods of time each day – and, still more, anyone intending to use the breathing control and other physical exercises in conjunction with the prayer – undoubtedly stands in need of a *staretz,* of an experienced spiritual guide. Such guides are extremely rare in our day. But those who have no personal contact with a *staretz* may still practise the prayer without any fear, so long as they do so only for limited periods – initially, for no more than ten or fifteen minutes at a time – and so long as they make no attempt to interfere with the natural rhythms of the body.
>
> *Kallistos Ware, Power of the Name, PNW p.13*

No book has been more successful in popularizing the Jesus prayer in the West than *The Way of a Pilgrim,* in which the author describes how he received instructions in ceaseless prayer from his *staretz* and practised them assiduously

with great benefit and inner joy. He is full of gratitude; but sadly, his master had only a little time remaining in this world:

> My lonely hut seemed like a splendid palace, and I knew not how to thank God for having sent to me, a lost sinner, so wholesome a guide and master.
>
> But I was not long to enjoy the teaching of my dear *staretz,* who was so full of divine wisdom. He died at the end of the summer. Weeping freely, I bade him farewell and thanked him for the fatherly teaching he had given my wretched self and, as a blessing and a keepsake, I begged for the rosary with which he said his prayers.
>
> *Way of a Pilgrim, WPW p.16*

In the sequel to this book, *The Pilgrim Continues His Way,* a dialogue is recorded in which a hermit, introduced to the pilgrim by his *staretz,* is asked what to do if a suitable *staretz* cannot be found. The hermit replies:

> The guidance of a director or *staretz* who is experienced and knowledgable in spiritual things, to whom one can open one's heart every day without hindrance, with confidence and advantage, and tell one's thoughts and what one has met with in the path of interior schooling, is the chief condition for the practice of prayer of the heart by one who has entered upon the life of silence. Yet, in cases where it is impossible to find such a one, the same holy fathers who prescribe this make an exception.
>
> Nikiphoros the Monk gives clear instructions about it, thus: "During the practice of inward activity of the heart, a genuine and well-informed director is required. If such a one is not at hand, then you must diligently search for one. If you do not find him, then calling contritely upon God for help, draw instruction and guidance from the teaching of the holy fathers, and verify it from the word of God set forth in the holy scriptures."[2]
>
> *The Pilgrim Continues His Way, PCWF pp.98–99*

It should be added that, like Kallistos Ware, most modern Orthodox writers regard unsupervised practice of the Jesus prayer as dangerous.

Although the human personalities of mystics are many and varied, there are some common denominators, and some insight into the nature of a *staretz* can be gained from Archimandrite Sophrony's account of his *staretz,* Staretz Silouan (1886–1938), translated from the Russian in *A Monk of Mount Athos:*

> To the outward observer the *staretz* remained an 'ordinary' man to the end of his days. He lived like all good monks – fulfilling the task given

him by obedience, sober in all things, observing the monastic rule and hours. He took the sacrament twice a week, three times during Lent; dressed simply like other working monks, but was heavily clad even in summer because of his rheumatism. His work in the warehouse was easy and well within his strength, taking up comparatively little of his time, though it demanded his presence all day. He was tranquil and benign to the last. He never lost his temper, nor did any earthly passion mar him inwardly or outwardly. Like all really experienced ascetics, he made no show of his inner life, standing before the Father in secret, as the Lord commanded.

He was no scholar, having attended the village school for only "two winters", but constant reading of the scriptures and the works of the holy fathers, and hearing them in church, had developed him considerably and made him, in the monastic sense, a well-read man.

His lively mind was quick to grasp essentials, and long experience of spiritual struggle and inner mental prayer, together with the exceptional nature of his sufferings and the divine visitations he received, made him superhumanly wise.

Staretz Silouan had a very tender heart, but his unusual sensitiveness and swift response to every kind of sorrow and affliction were quite free from sentimentality. His constant spiritual weeping never sank into querulous tears, and there was no trace of hysteria in his tireless inner striving.

Endowed as he was with a strong and powerful body, his absolute chastity is all the more astonishing. He sternly avoided any thought that might displease God, at the same time mixing freely and without constraint with all sorts of people, turning to them in love and friendship, whatever their state or manner of life – people living immoral lives arousing no disgust in him, although he was sincerely distressed at their falls, just as parents are distressed at their child's misdoings. . . .

He faced temptation with fortitude and was fearless, but without any sign of self-assurance. Though afraid of nothing, he lived in awe before God: he was that rare and beautiful combination of high courage and humility.

The *staretz* possessed a deep humility. He liked to honour others, but to be unconsidered himself, to greet others before being greeted. He set particular store by the blessings of bishops and abbots, and indeed of all in holy orders, but he was never obsequious or ingratiating. He had a genuine respect for people of rank and education, but no feeling of jealousy or inferiority – possibly because of his profound realization of the transience of worldly position, wealth, or even scholarship. He knew "how greatly the Lord loves His people", and his love for God and man made him value and respect every man.

Simplicity stamped the *staretz'* outward manner, but his demeanour did not mask the aristocracy of his spirit. Even the most perceptive intuition brought into contact with Father Silouan, whatever the circumstances, would have found nothing ignoble in him: he did not know what it was to spurn or disregard. He was a stranger to affectation.

The *staretz* never laughed aloud, never expressed himself equivocally, never derided or made fun of people. Occasionally a faint smile would cross his quiet, serious face, but his lips did not move unless he were speaking.

Anger, as a passion, had no place in his heart yet all that was false, evil and ugly, he opposed absolutely. Backbiting, pettiness, narrow-mindedness and the like found no support in him. When he encountered them he would show himself inflexible, yet contrive not to wound the man guilty of them, either by a visible reaction or an impulse of his heart (for a sensitive man would feel that, too). This he attained by inner prayer, which kept him serene and unreceptive of any evil. . . .

Staretz Silouan was possessed of unusual fineness of perception and astounding spiritual intuition. Even before the Lord (Jesus) appeared to him – and all the more so after his vision – he felt sin extraordinarily deeply and powerfully. Sin made his heart ache unendurably, and so his repentance was complete, his tears were unrestrainable, until he felt in his soul that God had forgiven him. To many this may seem strange, perhaps exaggerated, and indeed the *staretz'* example is not for all men.

When repenting of sin, he did not merely seek pardon, which God is swift to grant for a single sigh of regret, maybe. He looked for a forgiveness so complete that his soul might really feel the grace of God within her again. He prayed for strength if possible never to repeat his sin. He prayed to be delivered from 'the law which is in our members'. . . .

Father Silouan was a man in the proper sense of the word, made in the image and likeness of God. The world is beautiful – it is the creation of a mighty God. But there is nothing more beautiful than a true man, for man is the son of God. When I was with the *staretz,* my one desire was not to miss any of his spiritual teaching, but to gather and assimilate into my inmost self the essence of his thought, his personality, his spirit. Talking with him was always a very simple matter. There was never any sense of constraint or embarrassment or fear of blundering, for one felt that whatever one did or said, however clumsy or even absurd, nothing would sever the contact with him or upset its peace, or meet with reproach or sharp response. The heart felt no fear in his presence and at the same time one's soul was, as it were, tautened in a devout effort to be worthy to breathe the spirit with which he was filled.

Coming into a fragrant place, one unconsciously expands one's chest to breathe in deeply and fill one's lungs with the fragrance. So it was in the presence of the *staretz:* one's soul was possessed of a quiet, peaceful but profound longing to inhale the fragrance of that atmosphere of the spirit of Christ in which it was given him to live.

The *staretz* could talk simply and humbly about things beyond the limits of normal human experience, so that, if one had faith in him, one could share in some degree, through one of these outwardly simple conversations, the *staretz'* own supernatural state. . . .

The *staretz* believed that the essence of spiritual quiet lay not in living the life of a hermit or retiring to the desert, but in a constant dwelling in God. He said that both the recluse's way of life and the way of the desert solitary were simply means, never ends in themselves. They might help by diminishing external impressions and influences and keeping man aloof from life's sound and fury, thus favouring pure prayer, but only if such retirement from the world conforms to the will of God, and is not merely man's personal choice. A hermit's life, or any other kind of ascetic striving, will be sterile if it is self-willed, because the essential is not that we should arbitrarily perform ascetic feats, but that we should be obedient to the will of God.

The *staretz* thought that no one mode of ascetic endeavour was *per se* the highest form of spiritual life. Prayer in a desert, a life of seclusion, the assumption of folly for Christ's sake, the ministry or learned work in the field of theology – any one of these would be the highest way for a given person if it corresponded to God's will for him. Even so, when considering this or that kind of spiritual effort, this or that place or manner in which to serve God, the quest for pure prayer remains imperative and the ultimate aim. . . .

We know from some of his notes that the words of prayer should be spoken very slowly, one by one, each engrossing the whole being. The entire person focuses into a single point. The breathing changes and becomes constrained, or, to use a better term, secret, lest its 'temerity' disturb the projection and concentration of the spirit. The mind, the heart, the body to its very bones, are all drawn into this one point. Unseeing, the mind contemplates the world; unseeing, the heart lives the sufferings of the world, and in the heart itself suffering reaches its utmost limit. The heart – or, rather, the whole being – is submerged in tears.

The *staretz'* prayers were not verbose, though they went on for a very long time. Indeed, prayer is often wordless, the mind in an act of intuitive synthesis being aware of everything simultaneously. During such times, the soul hovers on that brink where a man may at any moment lose all sense of the world and of the body, where the

> mind ceases to think in separate concepts, and where the spirit will be sensible only of God. At such a moment a man forgets the world. His supplications die away, and in rapt silence he simply dwells in God.
>
> "When the mind is entirely in God, the world is quite forgotten," wrote the *staretz.* When, for reasons we do not know, this dwelling in God draws to a close, there is no prayer, but peace, love and profound tranquillity in the soul, and a certain intangible sadness because the Lord has left, for the soul would wish to dwell in God eternally.
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> *Archimandrite Sophrony, Monk of Mount Athos, MMA pp.36–38, 22, 38–39, 78, 33–34*

See also: **Christianity** (1.5).

1. *Matthew* 19:21.
2. Nikiphoros, *On Watchfulness, Philokalia; cf. PCT4* p.193.

Sthānakavāsī (S) *Lit.* hall *(sthānaka)* dwelling *(vāsi);* a follower of one of the main two *Shvetāmbara* Jain traditions; one who do not worship idols or images, either in material or mental form, and who live in specially built halls of residence and meditation that are separate from the main temple complex; also called *sādhu-mārgī* (*sādhu* followers). First appearing in a seventeenth-century text, the term *Sthānakavāsī* did not enter common use until the twentieth century.

It is traditionally believed that *Sthānakavāsī* practices are founded upon the teachings of a fifteenth-century Jain lay reformer Lonkāshāh, a wealthy and educated merchant. Present-day *Sthānakavāsīs,* however, trace their origins to five reformers who parted company with the *Lonkā Gachchha* during the seventeenth century. The *Sthānakavāsīs* came into existence around the same time as the *Digambara Terāpanthīs,* who likewise reject the worship of images.

Rejecting the veneration of images, *Sthānakavāsīs* practise meditation or mental worship *(bhāva-pūjā)* in their halls of residence. Other practices include the study of scriptures *(svādhyāya)* and various austerities. They eat and drink only during daylight hours, keep no food beyond the requirements of the next meal, and no water even for a single night. Monks are readily identified by the white rectangular cloth worn over their mouth (except when eating) to prevent the ingress of small creatures.[1]

See also: **Shvetāmbara**.

1. See "Sthānak(a)vāsī," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*

sthavira (S), **thera** (Pa), **gnas brtan pa** (T), **shàngzuò**, **zhǎnglǎo** (C), **joza**, **chōrō** (J) *Lit.* elder; old, ancient, venerable; a senior monk; a common term in Jain and Buddhist traditions.

In Jainism, *sthaviras* were mendicant leaders after the death of Mahāvīra (599–527 BCE), the twenty-fourth *Tīrthankara.* Some are said to have been disciples of Mahāvīra's appointed apostles *(gaṇadharas),* but little of the *sthaviras'* lives is known with any certainty. An account of their lives was written by Hemachandra (1089–1172 CE), as a sequel to his legendary history *Trishashṭi-Shalākā-Purusha-Charitra* ('The Acts of the Sixty-Three Illustrious Men').[1] But this was some fifteen hundred years after the death of Mahāvīra, and was presumably based upon traditional stories, handed down from generation to generation with all the legendary accretions and distortions to which such a system is prone. In later times, *sthavira* came to mean an elder and venerable monk.

Sthaviras are presumed to have had access to the earliest Jain teachings, which were contained in texts known as the fourteen *pūrvas* (ancient), all of which were subsequently lost. Well versed in the doctrines of the *pūrvas, sthaviras* are regarded as the authors of a body of Jain sacred literature known as the *anga-bāhyas.*

Extant Jain scriptures *(āgamas)* fall into two categories: *angas* (limbs) and *anga-bāhyas* (outside the *angas*). The *angas* are said to have been compiled by the chief disciples *(gaṇadharas)* as an organized presentation of a *Tīrthankara*'s teaching. The *anga-bāhyas* are believed to have been composed by the *sthaviras.* But from the very beginning, the history of the texts is shrouded in uncertainty, and there is often a considerable discrepancy between the traditional history and scholarly opinion drawn from an analysis of the available texts and archaeological data.

For many centuries, the texts were passed on by oral tradition, leaving them open to loss if too many of the custodians unexpectedly lost their lives at the same time. Severe drought and famine did intervene on at least two occasions – firstly a twelve-year famine around 160 years after the death of Mahāvīra, which scattered and reduced the population of the Jain community, and then a second famine around 800 years after Mahāvīra's departure. Councils were convened on both occasions for recitations of the texts and the attempt to preserve them. In fact, there were two councils in the same year after the second famine, and it is thought to have been around the time of these two councils that the texts were committed to writing. 150 years or so later (either 453 or 466 CE), a further council was held to resolve differences between the two versions that were in circulation at that time. Subsequently, an authorized version of the first eleven *angas,* written in the Prakrit language Ardha-Māgadhī, was circulated. By this time, the twelfth *anga* had already been lost, although when that happened is uncertain.

Despite the traditional history, based on linguistic and other evidence, scholars generally date the composition of *āgamas* to around the fourth or third centuries BCE, two or three centuries after the death of Mahāvīra. According to some scholars, the extant versions of the eleven *angas* also show signs of redaction at a later date. Moreover, *Digambara* leaders were absent from all three councils, and they maintain that both *angas* and *anga-bāhyas* were all lost, a process that began with the famine 160 years after the death of Mahāvīra, many centuries before they were committed to writing. Consequently, *Shvetāmbaras* and *Digambaras* differ over the authenticity of the extant texts, and the majority of texts accepted by the *Digambaras* are later texts written by various *āchāryas* and leading mendicants.

According to Jain tradition, two modes of mendicant life were acceptable during the lifetime of Mahāvīra – *sthavira-kalpa* (way of the elders) and *Jina-kalpa* (way of the *Jinas*), *kalpa* meaning the rules of conduct or way of acting. Members of the two groups were known as *sthavira-kalpins* and *Jina-kalpins.*

Those following the *sthavira-kalpa* lived in organized communities under the leadership of an *āchārya* (teacher, leader), by whom they were supervised in matters such as the rite of confession *(pratikramaṇa).*

Those following the *Jina-kalpa* adhered to a more rigorous discipline, including complete nudity, and lived either in isolation or with a small number of other monks. This was the way that Mahāvīra is said to have lived until he attained omniscience. A *Jina-kalpin* monk was not supervised by an *āchārya.* Both *Shvetāmbaras* and *Digambaras* agree that after the death of Jambu, the first *sthavira,* sixty-four years after the death of Mahāvīra, the only legitimate mendicant lifestyle would have been *sthavira-kalpa.* However, while agreeing that the life of a *Jina-kalpin* was more severe, they disagree as to the details of what such a life actually entailed – the extent to which clothes should be discarded, whether a begging bowl was permitted as opposed to cupped hands, and so on. Because of the more rigorous life of a *Jina-kalpin,* it is said that women could only choose the *sthavira-kalpa.*[2]

In Buddhism, after the Buddha's death, the *sthaviras* (elders) were one of two main divergent groups, the other being the *mahāsāṃghikas* (universal assembly, majority community). Although several theories, ancient and modern, have been advanced as to the causes of the schism, the reasons remain uncertain. Schisms normally occur in religions that are founded upon the teachings of a mystic when the human mind and intellect elaborate upon and misunderstand the original teachings, resulting in disagreements regarding both doctrine and practice. There will always be those who originate new ideas and philosophies alongside those who try to keep close to the original teachings. Human nature is such. In the Buddhist tradition, it was the *sthaviras* who claimed to be closest to the original teachings of the Buddha.

Nothing was written down during the Buddha's lifetime, presumably because he did not permit it, and in the absence of any definitive teachings, the two primary schools and their many offshoots have proliferated a variety of opinions and practices. In tracing the historical development of a religion, this kind of divergence is often presented in a positive light, as the religion's gradual evolution, addressing the changing times, and so on. But in terms of understanding and following what the 'founder' of the religion actually taught, such 'evolution' is generally a movement away from the very simple basics of true spirituality and mysticism. In the case of Buddhism, it may be presumed – as with other religions – that the schism arose from disagreements concerning doctrine and the practice thereof.

In later times, although the history is largely conjectural and presented according to the beliefs of the different schools, the Buddhist *Theravāda* tradition (S. *Sthaviravāda,* Way of the Elders) claimed descent from the *sthaviras. Theravāda* is characterized by its adherence to the group of texts known as the Pali Canon, which is the earliest collection of Buddhist texts preserved in a single language.

In present times, the Pali honorific *thera* (elder, old, venerable) is still used as a title conferred upon a *bhikkhu* (monk), normally ten years after ordination, though it may be given earlier as a result of evident wisdom, good character, complete knowledge of the doctrines, and practice of the four *jhānas* (meditations); the corresponding title for a nun is *therī* or *therikā.* A Buddhist monk's seniority is determined by the length of time since his ordination, rather than by his age. A monk of twenty years' standing is known as a *mahāthera* (great elder), although they generally call themselves *thera.*

The Pali *suttas* distinguish three grades of *bhikkhu – thera, majjhima* (middle), and *nava* (new). The *Dhammadāyāda Sutta,* for instance, speaks of three things for which all three grades of monk can be criticized or commended, depending on whether or not they follow the instructions of their teacher *(satthar).* These three are: training in seclusion (*i.e.* meditation), like their teacher; giving up those things that their teacher has told them to give up; and relinquishing a life of comfort, heedlessness, backsliding, and neglectfulness of seclusion (*i.e.* meditation).[3]

The *Dhammapada,* on the other hand, characteristically strikes a note of universal wisdom:

> A man is not an elder *(thera)* simply because his hair is grey:
> ripe in age he may be, but 'old-in-vain' is he called.
> He in whom dwell truth *(sacca),* virtue, non-violence,
> restraint and control, he who is wise and free from impurity –
> He is called an elder *(thera).*
>
> *Dhammapada 19:5–6; cf. DPN, DPR*

See also: **Theravāda** (▸3).

1. See "sthavira," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*
2. See "jina-kalpa," "sthavira-kalpa," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*
3. *Majjhima Nikāya* 3, *Dhammadāyāda Sutta, PTSM1* pp.14–15, *MDBB* p.1173.

sthavira-kalpin, **sthavira-kalpī** (S) *Lit.* one who follows the way of life *(kalpa)* of a *sthavira.* See **sthavira**.

sthita-dhī, **sthita-prajña** (S) *Lit.* abiding *(sthita)* in wisdom *(prajñā),* abiding in understanding *(dhī);* he who is established in spiritual wisdom, steady in wisdom; one who dwells in the Divine, having eliminated all desires and all vacillations of the mind, and who is unaffected by all the pairs of opposites that hold sway in this world; one who has attained permanent serenity and tranquillity; a spiritually enlightened person. *Dhī* means thought, especially spiritual reflection, spiritual wisdom, and meditation.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* provides an extensive description of such a person, when Arjuna asks Kṛishṇa:

> What are the signs of a man of steady wisdom *(sthita-prajña),*
> and *samādhi* (deep meditation).
> A man of steady wisdom *(sthita-dhī)* – how does he speak?
> How does he sit? How does he walk?
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 2:54*

And Kṛishṇa replies:

> O Pārtha, when a man abandons all the desires of the mind;
> When he is only satisfied by his spirit's
> dwelling in the supreme Spirit:
> Then is he called a man of steady wisdom *(sthita-prajña).*
>
> He whose mind is not agitated in adversity,
> who is free from desire amid pleasure,
> who is devoid of passion *(rāga),* fear *(bhaya),* and anger *(krodha):*
> Such a person is called a sage *(muni)* of steady wisdom *(sthita-dhī).*
>
> He whose mind is without self-centred affection for anything,
> who rejoices not in pleasant situations,
> nor recoils from those of an unpleasant nature:
> His wisdom *(prajñā)* is firmly established *(pratishṭhitā).*

He who can withdraw his senses from their objects,
like a tortoise can withdraw its limbs on all sides:
His wisdom *(prajñā)* is firmly established *(pratishṭhitā).*

Though they (the senses) fall away from the embodied soul
who turns away from them, yet the taste for them remains:
But when the supreme Truth is realized, even the taste departs.

O son of Kunti, the wayward senses
forcefully draw the mind even of one
who is striving earnestly on the path.
Having controlled them all,
he should become steadfastly devoted to me.
The wisdom *(prajñā)* of him whose senses are under control
is firmly established *(pratishṭhitā).*

Bhagavad Gītā 2:55–61

The ninth-century (CE) Vedantic philosopher and mystic Shankara echoes the style of the *Bhagavad Gītā:*

That man of steady wisdom *(sthita-prajña),* having merged his soul *(ātmā)* wholly in *Brahman,* enjoys eternal bliss, is changeless, and free from activity.

The kind of mental activity that admits only the identity of the soul *(ātmā)* and *Brahman,* free from all limitations and devoid of duality, and concerning itself only with pure intelligence, is called illumination. He who has this steadiness is called a man of steady wisdom *(sthita-prajña).*

Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 426–27; cf. VCSM pp.161–62

See also: **prajñā** (▸3).

stone that the builders rejected, **stone of witness**, **cornerstone**, **foundation stone**, **living stone**, **stumbling stone** Metaphors used in *Isaiah* and *Psalms,* later quoted or alluded to in early Christian writings, generally interpreted as a prophet.

Isaiah speaks of the "cornerstone" or "foundation stone":

That is why the Lord *Yahweh* says this:
"See how I lay in Zion, a stone of witness,
a precious cornerstone, a foundation stone:
The believer shall not stumble (over it).

> And I will make justice the measure,
> integrity the plumb line."
> *Isaiah 28:16–17, JB*

And also, of the "stumbling stone":

> He *(Yahweh)* is (both) the sanctuary and the stumbling stone.
> *Isaiah 8:14, JB*

It is a "stumbling stone" because the large stone at the base of the corner of two walls of a building often protruded as a protection against ill-driven, horse-drawn vehicles. It was essential for the protection of the building, but it was also an easy stone to stumble against, especially in the dark.

In *Psalms,* it is the keystone – at the top of the arch, located in the highest place, immediately beneath the roof – that is used as a metaphor:

> The stone that the builders refused
> has become the head of the corner.
> This is the Lord's doing,
> and it is marvellous in our eyes.
> *Psalms 118:22–23; cf. KJV*

The "cornerstone" or "foundation stone" of Isaiah is the prophet himself, "laid in Zion", the holy city of God. He is the epitome of "justice (goodness, righteousness)" and "integrity". This is the stone upon which the "believer", the follower of the prophet, will build his firm spiritual foundation. He "shall not stumble" over it and hurt himself, but will instead be supported.

The stone in the psalm, which "is become the head of the corner" after being previously rejected, is again the mystic or prophet, who has been rejected by the world for teaching things contrary to the religious beliefs of the time and yet is the trusted spiritual leader of those who are truly seeking God. The New Testament, and Christian interpreters in general, understand these verses anachronistically as a reference to Jesus.

In the apocryphal *Acts of Peter,* where the verses from the psalm are quoted, the stone is understood as Jesus, despised and rejected by some, but who in reality was the mystical Son of God, whom "the prophet…called a stone elect, and precious".[1] In the New Testament, Matthew relates:

> Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures, 'The stone that the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken from you, and given to a people who will bear its fruit.… And when the chief priests and

> Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking of them. But though they desired to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because everyone took him for a prophet.
>
> *Matthew 21:42–43, 45–46; cf. KJV, JB*

The passage comes at the end of the parable of the vineyard and the wicked husbandmen (the Pharisees) who persecute the servants (the prophets) and kill the son of the owner (the Son of God). Jesus is explaining what becomes of such people. He says that those who reject the Son of God will have lost the opportunity of finding the "kingdom of God". They will die, having missed the inherent potential of human existence.

In the New Testament letter designated as *1 Peter* – although Peter's authorship is usually considered doubtful – an interesting mixture of stone metaphors is found. The writer speaks of Jesus as "this living stone" and the "cornerstone", while his disciples, the "chosen of God", are engagingly portrayed in an extension of the metaphor as "living stones building a spiritual house".

Then, mixing allusions from *Isaiah* and *Psalms* somewhat more than the imagery will allow, the unknown writer refers to the "stone that the builders rejected" as both the "head of the corner" as well as a "stone to stumble over" – a remarkable acrobatic feat! The meaning is not entirely clear, but if the "living stone", the rejected stone and the cornerstone all refer to Jesus as the incarnation of the Word, then those who stumble against it are those who opposed or rejected him. But, says the writer, this was also a part of the divine plan. "This was also the fate in store for them":

> Therefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, like newborn babes, desire the honest milk of the Word *(Logos)* that you may grow thereby, now that you have tasted the goodness of the Lord. . . . He is the living stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him. So come close to Him so that you also – a holy priesthood offering the spiritual sacrifices that Jesus Christ has made acceptable to God – may become living stones building a spiritual house.
>
> As scripture says: "Behold, I lay in Zion a cornerstone, elect and precious; and whoever puts his trust in him will not be disappointed." To you therefore that believe – he (Jesus) is precious; but for unbelievers, the stone that the builders rejected has been made the head of the corner, a stone to stumble against, and a rock to bring men down. They stumble over it because they do not believe in the Word *(Logos):* this was also the fate in store for them.
>
> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the

> darkness into His marvellous light. Once you were not a people at all, and now you are the people of God; once you had obtained no mercy, but have now obtained mercy.
>
> *1 Peter 2:1–10; cf. JB, KJV, NJB*

1. *Acts of Peter* 24; *cf. ANT* p.325.

stranger A person from another country or locality; a person whom one does not know; a metaphor for the saviour who comes to the physical universe from an altogether different 'country' and is, so to speak, a stranger here. The term is used particularly in Mandaean literature, as in a text where the mythical saviour *Manda-ḍ-Hiia* ('*Gnōsis* of Life') is sent to this world on a mission of salvation:

> Who saw *Manda-ḍ-Hiia* who set out
> and came to the world?…
> When he had put on a robe of radiance and light,
> thrown over his shoulders,
> an ether-wreath he set upon his head,
> and he set it on all his kin.…
>
> Who has seen that which I have seen?
> Who saw the stranger who went and stayed
> at the house of his friends?
> I, who saw the stranger,
> my eyes were filled with his light.
> My eyes with light were filled,
> and knowledge *(manda)* dwelt in my heart.
>
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 163; cf. CPM p.141*

According to the fourth-century Christian, Ephraim Syrus, a stranger is also a metaphor that appears in the gnostic teachings of Marcion, Mānī, and Bardesanēs.[1] But St Ephraim's rant against the supposed heretics is so garbled as to be not only unreliable, but also pretty much incomprehensible. At the most, it would seem that the stranger is again the saviour. According to the equally unreliable rants of Epiphanius against the gnostics, the Sethians and Archontics also referred to their mythical saviour Seth (son of Adam) as the stranger *(Allogenēs).*[2] More reliable is a gnostic text among the Nag Hammadi library entitled *Allogenēs,* a revelational text describing the inner mystic journey of the central character Allogenēs, which comes about as the result of a "hundred years of meditation".[3]

See also: **stranger** (6.2).

1. Ephraim Syrus, *Against Marcion* 1–3, *EPR2* pp.xxv–lxv, *passim.*
2. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 39:5.1, 40:2.1, 7.1, 4; *PES* pp.258, 263, 267–68.
3. *Allogenēs* 57; *cf. NHS28* pp.216–17.

stylite A pillar hermit. An early Christian solitary who lived on top of a high pillar (Gk. *stylos*), fasting and practising various other austerities. Stylites were an expression of a tendency towards extreme asceticism that developed in late-fourth-century Eastern Christianity, and occasional stylites are still being mentioned as much as a thousand years later. The duration and severity of their austerities almost confound belief, though the sources of information are reliable. Palladius speaks of a hermit in Palestine who for twenty-five years lived in a cave on top of a mountain, never turning his face to the west.[1] Theodoret maintains that he saw a hermit who for ten years had remained in a tub, suspended in midair by poles.[2] Gregory of Nazianzus mentions a hermit who remained standing for many years, absorbed in contemplation.[3]

The first recorded stylite was a Syrian, St Simeon Stylitēs (*b.c.*388). A shepherd boy by origin, the young Simeon entered a monastery at the age of sixteen. However, owing to his predilection for extreme asceticism, he was judged unsuitable for community life by his fellow monks, and forced to leave. At first, he shut himself up in a hut for three years, where (it is said) he was able for the first time to pass the whole of Lent without eating or drinking. Later, he added to his Lenten fast the further mortification of standing continually throughout. His enclosure in the hut was followed by a period in isolation on a rocky desert promontory. But finding himself continuously disturbed by visitors seeking his advice or prayers, sometimes even to pluck hairs from his cloak or body, St Simeon took up pillar dwelling. His first pillar, built in 423, was around nine feet high. Subsequently replaced by others, the last in the series was fifty feet in height. St Simeon became famous throughout the Roman Empire, especially in Rome, where many pictures of him were to be found.

St Simeon spawned many imitators, women as well as men. Another extreme stylite, the seventh-century St Alypius, stood upright on a pillar near Adrianople in Paphlagonia for fifty-three years. After that, finding that his legs could no longer support him, he lay on his side, where he passed the remaining fourteen years of his life. It seems that St Simeon and St Alypius left themselves open to the elements; others, however, had a small hut or roof constructed on top of the pillar, as a shelter against sun and rain. Many of the platforms had a safety railing around. For food and drink, the stylites were entirely dependent upon whatever their disciples brought, and delivered to them by ladder.[4]

Though difficult, perhaps, for ordinary mortals to understand, extreme asceticism and mortification of the body is a feature of all religious traditions. Clearly, there is something obsessive and extreme in the psychology of such ascetics, and maybe they have something in common with those who undertake extreme exercise or dietary regimes. In a Christian context, the religious content may be linked to a desire to emulate the suffering of Jesus on the Cross or as a penance for sin. Spiritually, the idea behind asceticism is for the mind and soul to dominate the body, though it must be questioned whether such a focus on physical discipline can really free the inner being from the body. From the viewpoint of others, such extreme renunciation of the world may serve as a reminder of the religious or spiritual dimensions to human life.

See also: **anchorite**, **hermit**, **monk**, **solitary**.

1. Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 48.
2. Theodoret, *Philotheus* 28.
3. Gregory of Nazianzus, *PG37 col.*1456.
4. For most of the details, see "St Simeon Stylitēs," "stylites," *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1917).

suddha-vipassanā-yānika (Pa) *Lit.* one who makes pure *(suddha)* insight *(vipassanā)* his vehicle *(yānaka);* one who only practises insight meditation *(vipassanā-bhāvanā);* an insight practitioner. See **samatha-yānika**.

ṣūfī (A/P) (pl. *ṣūfīyah*) One who practises *taṣawwuf* (Sufism), the mystical path *(ṭarīqah)* associated with Islam, and which appears to have had its origins in Persia during the eighth century CE; anglicized as 'Sufi'. The mystical ideal of the Sufi is complete absorption in the Deity through annihilation *(fanā')* of the individual self in the divine Essence *(al-Dhāt)* or Truth *(al-Ḥaqq).* This is attained through specific meditational practices, alongside a pure way of life.

At the present time, the flourishing of Sufism has led to a large number of Sufi schools and orders. But according to the eleventh-century Hujwīrī (*d.c.*1077), Sufis were divided in his day into twelve schools, of which "ten are approved and two are disapproved":

> Every one of these ten sects has an excellent system and doctrine as regards both purification *(mujāhadat)* and contemplation *(mushāhadat).* Although they differ from each other in their devotional practices and ascetic disciplines, they agree in the fundamentals and derivatives of the religious law and unification.... The real essence

> of Sufism lies amidst the traditions *(akhbār)* of the *shaykhs,* and is divided only metaphorically and formally.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM p.218; cf. KM p.176*

Except perhaps for the wandering, loosely knit *Qalandarīyah,* Sufi orders have all been founded by individual Sufis. The present master of the order traces his descent by a chain *(silsilah)* of rightfully appointed successors to the founder, for whom there is likewise a chain of descent leading back to Muḥammad. In many cases, the second in the chain is Muḥammad's cousin and son-in-law ʿAlī ibn Ṭālib, regarded by many Sufis as the traditional founder of Sufism. These chains of succession, leading back to the Prophet, establish the legitimacy of the order within both Islam and Sufism.

Of uncertain origins, a variety of derivations have been proposed for the name 'Sufi'. Its first appearance is as an epithet of the eighth-century ascetic Abū Hāshim Ṣūfī of Kūfah (*d.c.*780). Writing in the fifteenth century, Jāmī says:

> Some hold the view that this term appeared in the first half of the second century (AH), and the first person who was formally called a *ṣūfī* was Abū Hāshim Ṣūfī, and the first place built as a *khānaqāh* (monastery) was in Shām (Syria).
>
> *Jāmī, Nafaḥāt al-Uns, NUJ p.31, in FLI p.242*

Like the Christian ascetics of Persia at that time, Abū Hāshim Ṣūfī wore a coarse woollen robe, and his epithet of 'Ṣūfī' is said to have been derived from the Persian *ṣūf* (wool). In those days, the term *labisat al-ṣūf* (he wore wool) was applied to someone who had renounced the world and become an ascetic.

Supporting this interpretation is the fact that Sufis of the past commonly wore patched woollen cloaks *(khirqah, muraqqaʿ),* a custom that Sufis have been anxious to trace to the time of Muḥammad. Hujwīrī relates a number of anecdotes concerning both Muḥammad and some of his followers who were said to have worn woollen garments. Among these were Muḥammad's cousin and son-in-law ʿAlī ibn Ṭālib and his father-in-law Abū Bakr. The ascetic Ḥasan of Baṣrah (a contemporary of Muḥammad) is also reported to have said that he had seen seventy of those who fought at Badr wearing wool. This was the first battle between the Muslims and the Quraysh of Mecca. Even Moses and Jesus are said to have worn woollen garments. Hujwīrī relates several other such instances, but although these cases help to establish that woollen garments were common among ascetics and holy men, they do not constitute confirmation of the etymology. Scholars have pointed out, however, that in the Persian language (unlike Arabic), people were named according to their style of dress, and so the derivation is possible. In modern times, Sufis do not identify themselves with any particular form of dress, unless required to do so by the master of their order.

But there are several other points of view, largely based upon phonetic similarity rather than genuine etymology. A number of Sufis have maintained, for instance, that their name is derived from the Arabic *ṣafā'* (purity). Hence, a Sufi is one characterized by the purity of his heart and the cleanliness of his deeds.

Some have derived their name from *ṣāf* (sincere), implying that a Sufi is one whose heart is sincere towards God. Others say that it is derived from *ṣaff al-awwal* (first rank). According to this interpretation, a Sufi is one of the elect, one who is in the first rank before God.

Others hold that the term comes from *ahl al-ṣuffah* (people of the veranda). A *ṣuffah* is a bench, and also a covered area at the entrance to a mosque, where benches are placed for people to rest. The *ahl al-ṣuffah* were the companions of Muḥammad who had fled with him from Mecca to Madīnah. Having neither friends nor employment, they are said to have lodged in the *ṣuffah* of the first mosque, living on donations from the faithful. In Sufi lore, they are sometimes seen as the forerunners of the Sufis, exemplifying the ideal of poverty.

Abū Rayḥān Bīrūnī (*c.*973–1050), a Persian scholar, philosopher, astronomer and scientist from Uzbekistan, has suggested that *ṣūfī* is derived from the Greek *sophia* (wisdom), implying divine or mystic Wisdom. *Sophia* means both external wisdom as well as the inner mystic Wisdom, the divine Word of God. By this derivation, a Sufi is one who is divinely wise, *i.e.* a mystic.

It is unlikely that the question of derivation will ever be resolved. Uncertainty was prevalent even in the time of Hujwīrī. In his *Kashf al-Maḥjūb,* one of the earliest extant Sufi texts, he mentions the possible derivations of 'Sufi' from the woollen garment *(jāmah-'i ṣūf),* the first rank *(ṣaff-i avval),* and purity *(ṣafā),* but adds:

> These explanations of the true meaning of Sufism *(taṣavvuf)* are far from satisfying the requirements of etymology, although each of them is supported by many subtle arguments. *Ṣafā* (purity) is universally praised, and its opposite is *kadar* (impurity). The Messenger – on whom be peace! – said: "The *ṣafw* (pure part) of this world is gone, and only its *kadar* (impurity) remains." Therefore, since the people of this persuasion have purified their morals and conduct, and have sought to free themselves from natural imperfections, they are called *ṣūfī*. . . . *Ṣafā* (purity) is the opposite of *kadar* (muddiness, impurity), and is one of the qualities of a real human being. The true *ṣūfī* is he who leaves impurity behind.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM pp.35, 37; cf. KM pp.30, 32*

Although, on ideological grounds, Hujwīrī clearly favours the association between Sufi and *ṣafā* (purity), he also argues, unconvincingly, that the name is too exalted to have any derivation at all:

> The name has no derivation answering to etymological requirements, inasmuch as Sufism *(taṣavvuf)* is too exalted to have any genus from which it might be derived.… All that exists is the opposite of purity *(ṣafā),* and things are not derived from their opposites. To Sufis *(ṣūfīyah),* the meaning of Sufism *(taṣavvuf)* is clearer than the sun and needs no explanation or indication. Since *'ṣūfī'* requires no explanation, all the world have become interpreters thereof, whether or not they recognize the dignity of the name at the time when they learn its meaning.… Purity, then, is a resplendent and manifest idea, and Sufism *(taṣavvuf)* is an imitation of that idea.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM pp.39–40; cf. KM pp.34–35*

Sufi literature abounds with definitions, short and long, of what it means to be a Sufi. Hujwīrī quotes "one of the *shaykhs*", who says that it signifies one who is "absorbed" in the divine "Beloved":

> *Ṣūfī* is a name that is given, and has formerly been given to the perfect saints *(kāmilān)* and spiritual adepts *(muḥaqqiqān).* One of the *shaykhs* says: "He that is purified by love is pure, and he that is absorbed in the Beloved and has abandoned all else is a *ṣūfī.*
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM p.39; cf. KM p.34*

And he goes on to quote various Sufis who have given their perspective on what it means to be a Sufi. Dhū al-Nūn, an Egyptian Sufi, says:

> The *ṣūfī* is he whose language, when he speaks, accurately reflects his inner condition. That is, he says nothing which he is not, and when he is silent his conduct reveals his condition, and his condition proclaims that he has severed all worldly attachments." That is, all that he says is based upon a firm foundation, and all that he does is pure detachment from the world *(tajrīd).* When he speaks, his speech is entirely the truth, and when he is silent his actions are wholly (imbued with) poverty (*faqr,* humility).
>
> *Dhū al-Nūn, in Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM p.41; cf. KM p.36*

Abū al-Ḥasan Nūrī says:

> "The Sufis *(ṣūfīyah)* are they whose spirits have been freed from the pollution of humanity, purified from carnal taint, and released from desire, so that they have found rest with God *(al-Ḥaqq)* in the first rank *(al-ṣaff al-awwal)* and the highest degree, and have fled from all save Him." And he also says: "The *ṣūfī* is he who has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything."
>
> *Abū al-Ḥasan Nūrī, in Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM p.42; cf. KM p.37*

Abū Muḥammad Murtaʿish says (and Hujwīrī explains):

> "The *ṣūfī* is he whose thought keeps pace with his foot." That is, he is entirely present: his soul is where his body is, and his body where his soul is, and his soul where his foot is, and his foot where his soul is. This is the sign of presence without absence. Some say, on the contrary: "He is absent from himself and present with God." It is not so: he is present with himself and present with God.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM p.44; cf. KM p.39*

And Shaykh Shiblī says:

> The *ṣūfī* is he who sees nothing except God in the two worlds."
>
> *Shaykh Shiblī, in Kashf al-Maḥjūb III, KMM p.44; cf. KM p.39*

Junayd (*d.c.*910), a well-known Sufi of Baghdad, was more interested in using the name to convey spiritual teaching than in determining its origins. He interprets the word as an acronym of the good qualities that are present in a Sufi:

> Junayd said, "The *ṣūfī* is derived from *ṣūf* (wool), which is made up of three letters: *ṣād, wāw,* and *fā'.* The *ṣād* represents patience *(ṣabr),* sincerity *(ṣidq),* and purity *(ṣafā).* The *wāw,* for amity *(wudd),* litany *(wird),* and fidelity *(wafā).* The *fā'* detachment *(fard),* poverty *(faqr),* and annihilation *(fanā).*"
>
> *Muḥammad Maʿsūm Shīrāzī, Ṭarā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq, THS p.106, in FNI6 p.136*

ʿAṭṭār makes a wordplay on several of the suggested origins of the name, but he too is unconcerned about the derivation:

> We are *ṣūfīs* on the *ṣuffah* (bench) of *ṣafā* (purity):
> unaware of ourselves and with God are we.
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān, Unsourced*

According to ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414–1492), Abū al-Ḥasan Kharaqānī, a simple unlettered villager and the master of Anṣārī of Harāt, observed that to be a Sufi means to lose all sense of personal selfhood. It is not a matter of what you wear:

> One does not become a *ṣūfī* by virtue of one's patched frock and prayer mat; one does not become a *ṣūfī* by adopting the customs and manners of the *ṣūfīs;* a *ṣūfī* is one who is not!
>
> *Kharaqānī, in Nafaḥāt al-Uns, NUJ p.298, in BWIC p.172*

For Kharaqānī, to be a Sufi meant to be totally detached and liberated from the world and all it contains, to be dependent on and desirous of nothing:

> A *ṣūfī* is a day that has no need of the sun; a night that has no need of the moon and stars; a 'nonbeing' that has no need of 'being'.
>
> *Kharaqānī, in Nafaḥāt al-Uns, NUJ p.298; cf. in BWIC p.172*

Anṣārī himself defines a Sufi as, "Something that neither harms the soles of the feet, nor leaves a trail of dust behind."[1] He, too, is referring to the absence of any sense of self or ego, that harms its 'owner' and leaves a trail behind it. The self is, as Abū Saʿīd says, a "trouble":

> To be a *ṣūfī* is to draw back from trouble *(takalluf);* and there is no greater trouble for you than your own self; for when you are occupied with yourself, you remain away from God.
>
> *Abū Saʿīd al-Khayr, Asrār al-Tawḥīd, ATS1 p.296; cf. in SIM p.49*

Al-Ḥallāj says that to be a Sufi is simply a matter of the quest for the Divine:

> The *ṣūfī* is he who aims from the first at reaching God, the creative Truth. Until he finds what he seeks, he takes no rest, nor does he concern himself with what others think.
>
> *Al-Ḥallāj, in Jāmī, Bahāristān, BJ p.7; cf. in RMI p.37*

> The *ṣūfī* is he who is pleased with all that God does, in order that God may be pleased with all that he does.
>
> *Abū Saʿīd al-Khayr, Asrār al-Tawḥīd, ATS1 p.290, in SIM p.49*

Al-Ghazālī, who did much to harmonize Sufism with orthodox Islam, says much the same:

> To be a *ṣūfī* means to abide continuously in God and to live at peace with men: whoever abides in God and deals rightly with men, treating them with unfailing kindness, is a *ṣūfī.* The right attitude towards your fellow men is that you should not lay burdens upon them according to your own desire, but rather burden yourself according to their desire. In your dealings with others, treat them as you would wish them to treat you, for the faith of God's servant is not made perfect unless he desires for others what he desires for himself.
>
> *Al-Ghazālī, Ayyuhā al-Walad, AWMG pp.115–16, 132, in RMI pp.62–63*

> The rule of the *ṣūfī* is that poverty should be his adornment, and patience his ornament, and satisfaction his steed, and trust his dignity.

> God alone is sufficient for him: he employs his members in acts of devotion, and it may be that he has no desire at all for worldly things or, if he has, only for what suffices for his needs. His heart is free from defilement and from distraction, because of his love for his Lord, and he looks towards Him in his inmost self, committing all things to Him and having fellowship with Him. He does not rely upon anything, nor does he have fellowship with any, save Him whom he worships, preferring God to all else.
>
> *Al-Ghazālī, Rawḍat al-Ṭālibīn, RTG p.143, in RMI p.63*

Interpreting Sufism for a Western audience of the early twentieth century, ʿInāyat Khān presents the Sufis as universal in outlook and above all religious distinctions. Their quest is for God alone:

> The journey of the Sufi is towards God. It is divine knowledge, which he seeks; it is the realization of God-consciousness, which is his goal.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK9 p.83*

> Sufis are the best examples in the world of dependence upon God.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK7 p.250*

> The Sufi is convinced that the one who does not love his fellow man cannot love God.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK9 p.261*

> The god of the Sufi is the God of every creed, and the God of all. Names make no difference to him. *Allāh,* God, *Gott, Dieu, Khudā, Brahma,* or *Bhagvān,* all these names and more are the names of his God; and yet to him, God is beyond the limitation of name. He sees his God in the sun, in the fire, in the idol which diverse sects worship; and he recognizes Him in all the forms of the universe, yet knowing Him to be beyond all form; God in all, and all in God, He being the Seen and the Unseen, the Only Being. God to the Sufi is not only a religious belief, but also the highest ideal the human mind can conceive.
>
> The Sufi, forgetting the self and aiming at the attainment of the divine ideal, walks constantly all through life in the path of love and light. In God, the Sufi sees the perfection of all that is in the reach of man's perception and yet he knows him to be above human reach. He looks to Him as the lover to his beloved, and takes all things in life as coming from Him, with perfect resignation. The sacred Name of God is to him as medicine to the patient. The divine Thought is the compass by which he steers the ship to the shores of immortality.

> The God-ideal is to the Sufi as a lift by which he raises himself to the eternal goal, the attainment of which is the only purpose of his life.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK1 p.13*

> The work of the Sufi is to awaken in his heart the sensitiveness, which will enable him to distinguish right from wrong, good from evil. And in this way, with the ever-increasing awakening of this spirit of sensitiveness, the Sufi builds his character. The Sufi is ready to tolerate others, to forgive others. He takes himself to task if he lacks beauty in expression, in thought, in speech, or in action.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK9 p.278*

Rūmī, characteristically, describes the highest Sufi as a perfect saint. Of these, he says, there are very few:

> The *ṣūfī* who has eaten his fill of the light of God:
> he is free from the shame of (spiritual) beggary;
> But of these *ṣūfīs* there are only a few among thousands:
> the rest are living in his empire.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:533–34; cf. MJR2 p.249*

> A *ṣūfī* is he who is a seeker of purity *(ṣafvat):*
> not one who wears a woollen garment,
> patches it and commits sodomy.
> In the eyes of these base scoundrels,
> *'ṣūfī'* has come to mean patching and sodomy, and no more.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī V:363–64; cf. MJR6 p.24*

The real Sufi, insists Rūmī, is not the body ("the form"), but the spirit within. Such a Sufi should be absorbed in inner, rather than outer, things:

> My dear friend, do not imagine that the *ṣūfī* is the form:
> How long, like children, will you be content
> with walnuts and raisins?
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:199; cf. MJR2 p.232*

Saʿdī writes that the love and longing of the Sufi goes on forever. For the true Sufi, there is no night for they are always in the presence of their luminous beloved:

> No time is sweeter than the time of love:
> the morning of lovers has no night.

The musicians have departed,
but the *ṣūfī* is still engaged in the mystic dance:
Love has a beginning but no end.
The desire of every seeker *(jūyandah)* comes to an end:
but for the gnostics, their yearning has no end.
Sa'dī, Ṭayyibāt 61:1–3, KSSS p.256; cf. TOS p.87

See also: **silsilah** (7.5), **taṣawwuf** (▸4).

1. Anṣārī, *Song of the Dervish, BWIC* p.216.

sugata (S/Pa), **bde bar gshegs pa** (T), **shànshì** (C), **zenzei** (J) *Lit.* gone *(gata)* well *(su);* going well, well-farer; one who has gone the right way; one who has fared well; happy one, blissful one, sublime one; one who has gone *(gshegs pa)* into bliss *(bde bar);* blessed one, fortunate one; a *buddha;* one of many epithets of the Buddha; also used in *sugata-garbha* (*buddha*-nature); related to *sugati* (happy state, happiness, bliss). The Japanese *zenzei* (the well-gone) is interpreted to mean one who has gone to the world of enlightenment. Medieval Buddhists in Indian were known as *Saugata* (followers of Sugata, the Buddha).

The term is of uncertain etymology, as is *tathāgata* (thus come one), an analogous epithet of the Buddha. It is possible that *sugata* may have been used in pre-Buddhist times for a holy man or saintly person – for one who is happy and blessed. But it was not until Buddhist times that it was used as an epithet or title of the Buddha. As a prefix, *su* implies well, good, excellent or blissful, giving a meaning of 'one who has gone to bliss'. This is the sense understood by *sugata* in its Tibetan translation *bde bar* (bliss) *gshegs pa* (one who has gone). Here, the implied meaning, as in Japanese, is 'one who has gone to *nirvāṇa*' or 'one who has gone to liberation'. Some scholars have suggested that *sugata* is a corruption of *svgata,* translating the term as 'welcome one' or 'welcome being', although others have regarded the interpretation as unnecessary and far-fetched. As an epithet of the Buddha, *sugata* became so familiar in Buddhism that any certainty regarding its etymological origins and particular meaning in the Buddhist context has been lost.[1]

Sugata is one of many honorific epithets of the Buddha and of all *buddhas.* The most commonly encountered include *tathāgata, arhat* (noble one), *bhagavān* (elevated one, lord), *jina* (conqueror), *samyak-saṃbuddha* (completely enlightened one), *sarvajña* (omniscient one), *vidyā-charaṇa-sampanna* (endowed with wisdom and moral conduct), *lokavid* (knower of the universe), *anuttara-purusha-damya-sārathi* (unsurpassed guide of those who need to be restrained), and *shasta-deva-manushyana* (teacher of gods and men). Using these epithets, the *Lotus Sūtra* speaks of past *buddhas:*

> I remember, young men of good family, that in the days of yore, many immeasurable, inconceivable, immense, infinite, countless aeons, more than countless aeons ago, nay, long and very long before, there was born a *tathāgata* called Chandrasūryapradīpa ('Sun and Moon Glow'), an *arhat,* . . . endowed with wisdom and moral conduct *(vidyā-charaṇa-sampanna),* a *sugata,* knower of the universe *(lokavid),* incomparable trainer of men *(anuttara-purusha-damya-sārathi),* teacher of gods and men *(shasta-deva-manushyana),* a *buddha,* and lord *(bhagavān).*
>
> *Lotus Sūtra 1; cf. LSHK p.18*

The *Mahāvyutpatti,* a classical Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicon compiled in Tibet during the late eighth to early ninth centuries as an aid to translating Sanskrit Buddhist texts into Tibetan, lists around eighty such epithets.

The term appears to have been used by the Buddha, although in the context it is difficult to be sure of the intended meaning, and translations differ considerably. According to the *Dhammapada:*

> Him I call a *brāhmaṇ* who fully knows the death and rebirth of beings,
> who is free from attachment, has travelled the right way *(sugata),*
> and is awakened *(buddha).*
>
> *Dhammapada 26:37*

As an epithet of the Buddha or in references to other *buddhas, sugata* is used in many Buddhist texts, both in Sanskrit and Pali. The *Lotus Sūtra* speaks both of the Buddha as Sugata and of the many enlightened ones as *sugatas:*

> I see some sons of the Sugata, still and silent, humble in conduct,
> living under the command of the *sugatas,*
> honoured by men, gods, demons, and titans. . . .
>
> Why is it that the Sugata has now emitted such a light?
> Oh, how great is the power of the leader of men!
> Oh, how extensive and holy is his knowledge! . . .
>
> Wonderful is the teaching expounded by the Sugata,
> a teaching we never heard before;
> How great is the majesty of such leaders,
> and how infinite the duration of their life!
>
> On hearing such a teaching, imparted by the Sugata face to face,
> thousands of millions of beings, true sons of the leader of the world,
> have been pervaded by bliss.

> Some have reached the point of supreme enlightenment
> whence there is no return; others stand at a lower level. . . .
> There are others, as numerous as atoms,
> who have reached supreme *buddha*-wisdom.
> Some again, after eight births,
> will become *Jinas* who perceive the Infinite.
>
> *Lotus Sūtra 1:29, 52, 16:1–4; cf. LSHK pp.13, 16, 314*

Concerned more with conveying Buddhist teachings than with a definitive etymology, Buddhist commentators have provided various interpretations of the term. In his *Visuddhimagga,* the fifth-century Buddhist scholar and commentator Buddhaghosa suggests four:

> He is called Sugata because his manner of going is good *(sobhaṇa-gamana);* because he has gone to an excellent place *(sundaraṃ ṭhānaṃ gatattā),* because he has gone rightly *(sammā-gatattā),* and because he speaks rightly *(sammā-gadattā).*
>
> *Buddhaghosa, Visuddhimagga 7:33, PTSV p.203; cf. PPVM pp.196–97*

Buddhaghosa further explains that the Sugata's "manner of going is good" because he is "purified and blameless", following the noble path "without attachment"; the "excellent place" to which he has gone is the "deathless *nirvāṇa*"; he has "gone rightly" because he will never again "turn back or return to the defilements" that he abandoned by treading the path of the *arahanta;*[2] and he "speaks rightly" because he does not speak that which he "knows to be untrue and incorrect", but speaks only that which he "knows to be true and correct". He also knows the right time to speak lest what he says should be "conducive to harm, or displeasing and unwelcome" to others.[3]

Following Buddhaghosa, the philosopher Nāgārjuna also says that *"su* means 'good' and *gata* means either 'to go' or 'speaking *(gad)*'"; and he too concludes that *sugata* "means the 'well-gone' or the 'well-spoken'". In respect of 'well-gone', he quotes a verse:

> The Buddha has omniscience *(sarvajñāna)* as his chariot,
> by means of the eightfold noble Path, he has gone to *nirvāṇa.*
> This is why he is called Sugata, the well-gone.
>
> *Nāgārjuna, Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra 4, TVW1 p.121*

He also maintains that he is well spoken because what he teaches is true and because he knows how to reach each individual disciples in the right way and at the right time:

> He is Sugata, well spoken, because he preaches the doctrine according to the true nature of the *dharmas* and without being attached to the doctrine. Taking into account the degree of wisdom of his disciples, he uses every skilful means and the power of his super-knowledges *(abhijñā)* to convert them *(parināṃa).* He alone knows who can be saved, who is sick or weakened, what each one needs to be saved, to whom it is suitable to preach generosity or discipline or *nirvāṇa,* to whom he can expound the system *(dharma)* of the five elements *(pañcha-skandha),* the twelve causes *(dvādasha-hetupratyaya),* or the four truths *(chatur-ārya-satya), etc.,* in order to introduce them to the Path.
>
> It is under aspects such as these that he knows the extent of knowledge *(jñāna)* of his disciples and that, consequently, he preaches the doctrine. This is why he is called Sugata, the well spoken.
>
> *Nāgārjuna, Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra 4, TVW1 p.121*

Elsewhere, explaining the meaning of the various epithets of the Buddha, he adds, "He does not turn back (to a prior state of existence): this is why he is called Sugata."[4]

Following a similar line of thought, the Tibetan scholars Khenpo Kunpal and Khenpo Chöga understand *su* as 'excellent', 'beautiful' and 'blissful' and *gata* as 'to go' or 'to embark upon a journey'. They therefore assert that *sugata* means either 'excellently or beautifully gone', 'gone without returning', and 'perfectly or completely gone'. They say that to go 'excellently', 'beautifully' and 'blissfully' means that despite the Buddha's full awareness of the truth concerning human suffering, he remained untainted by it, either by its existence or by its origin, which is *karma.* Both are a part of *saṃsāra* and point to human imperfections and afflictions *(kun nyon).*[5]

See also: **tathāgata**.

1. Max Müller, *The Dhammapada, DPMM* p.94 (n.419).
2. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 7:33–35, *PTSV* pp.203–4; *cf. PPVM* p.197.
3. *Majjhima Nikāya* 58, *Abhaya Sutta, PTSM1* p.395; *cf.* in *PPVM* p.197.
4. Nāgārjuna, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra* 39:4, *TVW3* p.1241.
5. Khenpo Kunpal and Khenpo Chöga, on *Bodhisattva-Charyāvatāra* 161–64; *cf. DNK1* pp.198–99, 400–3.

sulṭān (A/P) *Lit.* authority, power, warrant, sanction; king, sovereign, ruler; also, a title of respectful address or reference for a Sufi master, as in Sulṭān Bāhū, and so on; also, God, the supreme ruler of His creation; metaphorically, a master, a *pīr,* a *murshid,* in his inner or outer form.

Sulṭān is used at several places in the *Qur'ān.* It is the divine "authority":

> Do you dispute with me over names that you have devised, you and your fathers, without authority *(sulṭān)* from God?
>
> *Qur'ān 7:71; cf. AYA*

It is also the authority of Satan *(Shayṭān):*

> Over My servants, you shall have no authority *(sulṭān),* except such as put themselves in the wrong and follow you.
>
> *Qur'ān 15:42; cf. AYA*

It is also the authority of the divine presence that the devotee desires:

> From your presence, grant me a sustaining power *(sulṭān).*
>
> *Qur'ān 17:80; cf. AYA, MGK*

As a human authority, a *sulṭān* is generally regarded as someone possessing great wealth. Sufis say that spiritual wealth is of far greater value than material wealth. It brings great internal happiness whatever the material circumstances; it confers tremendous inner strength and power; and it goes with the soul at death. Spiritually speaking, even a very poor person who has this wealth is infinitely richer and stronger than any worldly potentate. ʿIrāqī therefore writes:

> How can a beggar become a *sulṭān?*
> Bah! How can a fly become Solomon?
> How can this beggar become the *sulṭān,*
> when he already *is* the *sulṭān?*
> Bizarre, bizarre, and rare indeed!
> Since one is the same as the other,
> how can *this* be *that?*
>
> *ʿIrāqī, Divine Flashes 7, KHI p.385, RLRI p.38, DF p.87*

Rūmī also says:

> The dervishes are kings *(mulūk),*
> all of them selfless in intoxication.
> Though made of dust, they are *shāhs* and *sulṭāns.*
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 572:6078, KSD2 p.28, in SPL p.190*

In fact, Sufis say that the perfect saint is God, the divine *Sulṭān,* in human form:

How can Reality be squeezed into the box of form?
What business has the *Sulṭān* in this beggar's realm?
ʿIrāqī, Divine Flashes 9, KHI p.387, RLRI p.41; cf. DF p.90

It is with this understanding that Ḥāfiẓ indicates complete acquiescence to his master's will:

Come! Drink wine! For last night the master *(pīr)* of the tavern
told many stories concerning the forgiveness
of the Merciful and Compassionate.
But as to 'how' and 'why', say not a word.
For the happy slave accepts in his soul
every word that the *sulṭān* uttered.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (103:8, 10) p.124, DIH p.89; cf. DHWC (76:9–10) p.181

The "tyranny" Ḥāfiẓ speaks of is the rankling longing to be with the master within – who comes and goes as he pleases:

If I had any expectations of the *sulṭān,*
it was a mistake;
If I sought good faith from the heart-ravisher,
he dealt out tyranny.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.89, DIH p.177; cf. DHWC (116:6) p.242

Rūmī also expresses devotion to his master by reference to the story of the powerful ruler Sulṭān Maḥmūd and his devoted minister Ayāz:

O Shams-i Tabrīzī,
you are the *sulṭān* of the *sulṭāns* of the soul *(jān);*
No Maḥmūd like you ever existed,
nor any Ayāz like me!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1195:12716, KSD3 p.71

He also speaks of the soul's joy at meeting with the inner beloved:

Did you hear of that soul who became intoxicated
from the cup of spring,
and went off dancing joyfully into the *sulṭān*'s sanctum?
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 782:8160, KSD2 p.137

In fact, anyone who enters this inner "sanctum" becomes a spiritual *"sulṭān":*

This house, in which the sound of the viol *(chaghānah)*
 is heard continually:
Ask of the master what house this is. . . .
In this house is a treasure
 that the universe is too small to hold. . . .
Whoever found the way into this house
 is the *sulṭān* of the world and the Solomon of the time.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 332:3589, 91, KSD1 p.199

Sulṭān is also used in a number of compound expressions. Hujwīrī speaks of God as the *Sulṭān-i Ḥaqīqat* (*Sulṭān* of Truth).[1] A well-known Sufi, Abū Yazīd, is often referred to as the *sulṭān-i ʿārifīn* (*sulṭān* of the gnostics), and Rūmī calls him a *sulṭān-i taqvā* (*sulṭān* of piety).[2] Rūmī has the devil address God as the *Sulṭān-i Takht* (*Sulṭān* of the Throne).[3] The epithet *sulṭān al-ʿulamā'* (*sulṭān* of the scholars) was given to Rūmī's father during the family's stay in Konya, and Rūmī himself uses many other such epithets. In his *Maśnavī, sulṭān-i jān* (*sulṭān* of the soul) is an epithet given to Muḥammad by the angel Gabriel.[4] An ascetic dervish, living alone in the desert and endowed with miraculous powers, is addressed as *sulṭān-i dīn* (*sulṭān* of the religion);[5] and in his *dīvān,* he refers to his own master as the *sulṭān-i viṣāl* (*sulṭān* of union)[6] and the *sulṭān* of love:

Others call you 'love',
 but I call you the *sulṭān* of love *('ishq)* –
O you who are beyond all concepts of this or that,
 do not leave without me!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2195:23303, KSD5 p.52; cf. in SPL p.196

Rūmī also says that the divine beloved, the *"sulṭān* of hearts *(sulṭān-i dil ʾhā)",* waits "expectantly" for a pure "heart" to come to him. He even accepts impure hearts ("damaged goods") from the "bazaar" of this world:

The *sulṭān* of hearts *(sulṭān-i dil ʾhā)* is waiting expectantly
 for a heart full of light and goodness. . . .
The august owner of the heart *(ṣāḥib-i dil)*
 is a buyer of damaged goods in our bazaar.
Seek the owner of the heart *(ṣāḥib-i dil),*
 if you are not soulless:
Become a companion of the heart,
 if you are not an adversary of the *sulṭān.*
Rūmī, Maśnavī V:888, 901–2; cf. MJR6 pp.55, 56

It is a blissful day for a soul when the master appears – inside or out:

> It is a day of revelry, a year of joy,
> for today you have happened by our lane!
> The darkness of heartache lifted
> when you placed your candle in the midst.
> How can thought and heartache stand up
> to the cup of faithfulness that you have poured?…
> You are intoxicated, joyful, and happy,
> you are the *sulṭān* and *kayqubād* of the heart.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2744:29168–70, 72, KSD6 pp.80–81; cf. in SPL p.323*

See also: **shāh**.

1. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* XIV, *KMM* p.234; *cf. KM* p.188.
2. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* IV:1803, *MJR4* p.372.
3. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* V:951, *MJR6* p.59.
4. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:1067, *MJR2* p.60.
5. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* II:3800, *MJR2* p.419.
6. Rūmī, *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz* 2718:28857, *KSD6* p.64, in *SPL* p.255.

ṣūrat al-Ḥaqq (A/P), **ṣūrat-i Ḥaqq** (P) *Lit.* form *(ṣūrat)* of the Truth *(al-Ḥaqq);* form of the Real; the face of Truth; the inner essence of the Prophet; one who has realized the divine Truth:

> It is like light that is projected through shadow, a shadow which is nothing but the screen (for light), and which is itself luminous by its transparence. Such also is the man who has realized the Truth; in him the form of the Truth *(ṣūrat al-Ḥaqq)* is… directly manifested.… For there are among us those for whom God is his hearing, his sight, his faculties, and organs.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam, SFHA p.701, in HETI p.34*

ṣūrat al-ilāh (A) *Lit.* divine *(ilāh)* form *(ṣūrat);* generally transliterated as *ṣūratiʾlāh;* one who has realized the Divine; the perfect man:

> *(Ṣūratiʾlāh)* refers to the perfect man *(insān-i kāmil),* who has realized the realities of the divine Names.
>
> *Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasāʾil, RNV4 p.140; cf. in SSE1 p.10*

ṭāhir (A/P) (fem. *ṭāhirah*) *Lit.* pure, chaste, holy, clean; hence, pure one, blessed one, holy one; a pure, pious and orthodox Muslim, who follows all the observances laid down in the *sharīʿah* (external religious law); someone in a state of ritual purity *(iḥrām),* according to the *sharīʿah;* in Sufism, a holy man or mystic. Al-Qāshānī categorizes the various gradations of 'pure one':

> The pure one *(al-ṭāhir):* one whom God protects from error.
>
> The externally pure one *(ṭāhir al-ẓāhir):* one whom God protects from acts of disobedience.
>
> The inwardly pure one *(ṭāhir al-bāṭin):* one whom God protects from temptations, carnal desires, and attachment to others.
>
> One of pure innermost consciousness *(ṭāhir al-sirr):* he who is not distracted from God, even for so much as the twinkling of an eye.
>
> One who is pure externally and in his innermost consciousness *(ṭāhir al-sirr wa al-ʿalāniyah):* he who has undertaken to perform his duty to both God and the creation, trying to do justice to them both.
>
> *Al-Qāshānī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah 133–37, GSTA p.40*

See also: **walī**.

tahn (Thai) *Lit.* reverend, venerable; a prefix to the name of a Buddhist monk. See **phra**.

takkī (S/Pa) *Lit.* logician, reasoner, rationalist, sophist, intellectual; a term appearing in the Buddhist Pali texts, where the way of the *takkī* is regarded as inferior to the way of direct personal experience. In the *Dīgha Nikāya,* the Buddha observes:

> There are, monks, some *samaṇas* (holy men, monks, contemplatives, ascetics) and *brāhmaṇs* who are speculators about the past, having fixed views about the past, and who put forward various speculative theories about the past, in eighteen different ways. On what basis, on what grounds do they do so? There are some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who are eternalists, who proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways – but on what grounds?
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 1, Brahmajāla Sutta 1:29–30, PTSD1 pp.12–13; cf. TBLD p.73*

The Buddha then goes on to describe the four ways by which such a person develops this incorrect view of the nature of Reality. The first basis for a mistaken understanding arises from an awareness of his many past lives:

> Here, monks, a certain *samaṇa* or *brāhmaṇ* has by means of effort, exertion, application, earnestness and right attention attained to such a state of mental concentration *(ceto-samādhi)* that he thereby recalls past existences – one birth, two births, three, four, five, ten births, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand births, several hundred, several thousand, several hundred thousand births.
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 1, Brahmajāla Sutta 1:31, PTSD1 p.13, TBLD pp.73–74*

Remembrance of the "conditions and details" of these past births is then further elaborated – the names and castes he had, the food he ate, the circumstances under which he lived, and the length of his life – as he passes from one birth to another. From this the man erroneously concludes:

> The self and the world are eternal, producing nothing new, steadfast as a mountain peak, standing as firmly as a pillar. And although these beings roam and wander, pass away and re-arise, yet the world remains eternally the same. Why so? (Because he thinks:) "I have by means of effort, exertion, *etc.*. . . . attained to such a state of mental concentration that I have thereby recalled various past existences. . . . That is how I know the self and the world to be eternal."
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 1, Brahmajāla Sutta 1:31, PTSD1 p.14; cf. TBLD p.74*

The second basis for this incorrect perception of the world and the individual self, explains the Buddha, is when such a practitioner "recalls one period of contraction and expansion, two such periods, three, four, five, ten periods of contraction and expansion". He is speaking of the ages of the universe, its inbreathing and its outbreathing, according to Buddhist cosmogony. Experiencing this also leads the man to "proclaim the eternity of the self and the world".[1]

The third basis for this erroneous understanding is to recall the names by which he was known during these long periods of time, and which is depicted in a similar manner. The fourth basis, however, is different. Although the conclusion is the same, the first three are based upon direct experience of things, while the fourth is the way of the "reasoner *(takkī)* and investigator *(vīmaṃsī)*":

> Hammering it out by reason, following his own line of thought, he argues: "The self and the world are eternal, producing nothing new, steadfast as a mountain peak, standing as firmly as a pillar. And although these beings roam and wander, pass away and re-arise, yet the world remains eternally the same."
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 1, Brahmajāla Sutta 1:34, PTSD1 p.16; cf. TBLD p.74*

These perspectives, continues the Buddha, will indeed lead their holders to various other worlds after death, but not to a correct understanding of Reality. Indeed, the Buddha himself has had these experiences, but has not drawn the same conclusions:

> This the Tathāgata knows, and more, but he is not attached to that knowledge. And being thus unattached, he has experienced for himself perfect peace, and having truly understood the arising and passing away of feelings, their attraction and peril and the deliverance from them, the Tathāgata is liberated without remainder.
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 1, Brahmajāla Sutta 1:36, PTSD1 pp.16–17, TBLD p.75*

In the *Majjhima Nikāya,* the Buddha is asked for his views on the diverse perspectives from which *"samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs"* teach "the fundamentals of the holy life". He replies that there are the "traditionalists *(anussavika)*" who base their teaching on the oral tradition of the three *Vedas;* and there are others who do so on the basis of "faith", also in the absence of direct inner experience. These, he says, are the "reasoner-investigators *(takkī vīmaṃsī)*".[2] Finally, he concludes:

> There are some *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who, having directly known the *Dhamma* (Way) for themselves among things not heard before, claim to understand the fundamentals of the holy life after having reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge, here and now. I…am one of those *samaṇas* and *brāhmaṇs* who, having directly known the *Dhamma* for themselves among things not heard before, claim to understand the fundamentals of the holy life after having reached the consummation and perfection of direct knowledge, here and now.
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya 100, Sangārava Sutta 7–8, PTSM2 p.211; cf. MDBB p.820*

The Buddha is depicting three perspectives on the spiritual life. There is the way of the scholarly follower of religion who only reads the scriptures and holy books; the way of the logician *(takkī)* – the intellectual philosopher or seeker – who reasons things out, and reaches various conclusions, which may or may not be accurate; and there is the way of the mystic who, having experienced everything for himself, knows the nature of Reality, and has no need of books or intellect. The Buddha is pointing out that personal experience is the best way.

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* 1, *Brahmajāla Sutta, PTSD1* pp.14–15; *cf. TBLD* p.74.
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* 100, *Sangārava Sutta, PTSM2* p.211, *MDBB* p.820.

tapasvī (S/H/Pu), **tapī** (H/Pu) *Lit.* one who practises austerities *(tapas);* an ascetic. See **tapas** (▸3).

tathāgata (S/Pa/H), **de bzhin gshegs pa** (T), **rúlái** (C), **nyorai** (J) An epithet used by the Buddha in reference to himself after he had attained enlightenment, and also to previous *buddhas;* one who has attained *nirvāṇa* (Pa. *nibbāna*); of uncertain derivation, but usually understood to be from *tathā-āgata* (thus come, come like that) or *tathā-gata* (thus gone, gone like that); hence, 'thus come one', 'he who has come and gone like former *buddhas*' – that is, someone who has taught the same path, leading to the same goal; alternatively, 'he who has come like that himself' – that is, he who practises what he teaches. An alternative derivation, favoured particularly by the *Mahāyāna* tradition, relates *tathāgata* to *Tathā-tā* (That, Suchness, the true nature of things), referring to the sublime Essence within all things. This leads to meanings such as 'he who has come from the Suchness,' or 'he who is the Suchness itself,' or 'he who has attained full realization of Suchness.'

A *tathāgata* has attained union with the Absolute, the *dharma* body *(dharmakāya),* neither coming *(na āgamana)* nor going *(na gamana).* Since he is always with the one Absolute, all movement is relative to the all-encompassing, motionless Wholeness in which he has his being. He neither comes nor goes in the whirlpool of transmigration:

> Whosoever… says that the *tathāgata* goes, or comes, or stands, or sits, or lies down, he does not understand the meaning of my teaching. And why? *Tathāgata* is called one who does not go to anywhere, and who does not come from anywhere. Therefore is he called the *tathāgata,* the *arhat,* the fully enlightened.
>
> *Diamond Sūtra 29; cf. SBE49 p.142*

Other honorific epithets of the Buddha include *arhat* (noble one), *bhagavān* (elevated one, lord), *jina* (conqueror), and *samyak-saṃbuddha* (perfectly enlightened one). The Buddha himself, Siddhārtha Gautama, is also known as Shākyamuni (sage of the *Shakyas*), especially in the *Mahāyāna* tradition.

According to the *Theravāda* Buddhist tradition, there can only be one *buddha* or *tathāgata* working in a particular "world system" at any one time. In this *sūtra,* the seeker King Milinda is talking to the Buddhist monk Nāgasena:

> King Milinda: The Lord, Nāgasena, has said: "It is impossible, O monks, it cannot be, that in one single world system two fully enlightened *buddhas* should simultaneously appear – that is quite

> impossible." But, Nāgasena, all the *tathāgatas* always teach the same thirty-seven *dharmas,* which act as wings to enlightenment; they explain the same four noble truths; when they give instructions, it is of the same three trainings (morality, meditation, and wisdom), and they all admonish us to practise vigilance. So if, Nāgasena, all *tathāgatas* have one and the same teaching, doctrine, training and instruction, why then should two *tathāgatas* not arise at the same time? The appearance of even one *buddha* already lights up this world. If there should be a second *buddha,* the splendour emanating from the two would light up the world yet more. Moreover, two *tathāgatas* could instruct with greater ease, could exhort us with greater ease! Tell me therefore the reason for this saying of the Lord, so that my doubts may be dispelled!
>
> NĀGASENA: This world system, O king, of ten thousand worlds can bear just one single *buddha,* can bear the virtue of just one single *tathāgata.* Were a second *tathāgata* to arise, this world system of ten thousand worlds could not bear him. It would shake and tremble, bend this way and that, disperse, scatter into pieces, dissolve, and be utterly destroyed. It is like a boat that can carry only one man. When one man has got into it, it would be well trimmed and able to bear his weight. But if a second man should come along, as large and weighty as the first, and also get into it, would then that boat be able to carry them both?
>
> *Questions of King Milinda (52) 4:6.4–5, PTSQ pp.236–37; cf. in BSEC p.211, SBE36 pp.47–48*

Mahāyāna sūtras concur, but point out that the Buddha was speaking of one *buddha* per world system. Other world systems will have their own *buddhas.*[1]

According to a *Mahāyāna* doctrine, propounded in a number of *sūtras,* including the *Tathāgata Sūtra,* all beings have the potential to become a *buddha,* but are veiled from realizing this eternal and essentially real *tathāgata-garbha* (embryonic *buddha, buddha*-nature) within themselves by the negative elements and defilements *(kleshas)* that arise from contact with and attraction to *saṃsāra* (cycle of birth and death, worldly existence). The *tathāgata-garbha* contains within itself all the qualities and attributes that comprise the essential nature of *buddha.* For this reason, it is also described as the 'storehouse' from which a *buddha*'s teachings emanate.

Buddhist texts provide a number of indications as to the characteristics of a *tathāgata.* Firstly, the Buddha was not the only *tathāgata.* In the *Dhammapada,* the Buddha speaks of the *tathāgatas* in the plural. He also insists that although *tathāgatas* may point the way, disciples must still make an effort to follow the spiritual path:

You yourselves must strive:
the *tathāgatas* are only teachers.
Those who follow the path, and practise meditation
are freed from bondage to *Māra* (the devil, death, sin).

Dhammapada 20:4

The Buddha also observes that the *tathāgatas* are free from the human propensity to create problems of every kind:

Mankind delights in obstacles:
the *tathāgatas* are free from obstacles.

Dhammapada 18:20, DPN

A *tathāgata* possesses full understanding of all things. According to the *Vajrachchhedikā* ('Diamond') *Sūtra,* in addition to his physical eyes, the *tathāgatas* possess inner, mystical vision, described as the "divine eye" and the "eye of wisdom".[2]

In various *sūtras,* with some minor variations between them, the *tathāgata* is said to possess eighteen qualities that exhibit his inner perfection. Six are associated with his outer behaviour: he moves gracefully and his conduct is never founded upon delusion of any kind; his speech is neither garrulous, loud, nor ill-considered; he possesses an unfailing memory and intelligence; he is always at peace; he is free of conceptual thinking, not clinging to ideas; and he is diligent in all matters, free from indifference or carelessness.

Six qualities are associated with his inner spiritual realization: he gives unwavering attention to his work of spreading the message of the *Dharma* (Way) for the benefit of all beings; he is indefatigable, never losing his energy and vigour; he is always focused, mindful and aware, seeing things for exactly what they are; he has unfailing wisdom, discernment, and understanding; he lives in a state of constant meditation *(jhāna, samādhi);* and he is permanently liberated.

Six qualities are associated with this state of consciousness and permanent meditative awareness: his deeds, his speech, and his mind are all informed and permeated by his state of constant meditation; as a consequence, whatever he does, says or thinks is meaningful. Likewise, his all-pervading awareness gives him an unobscured vision and wisdom concerning the past, the present, and the future; as a result, he knows everything.[3]

The purpose for which he is born is to be a spiritual teacher:

> Then the Blessed One spoke, and said: "Know, Vāseṭṭha, that a *tathāgata* is born into the world, an *arahanta,* a fully awakened one, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy, with knowledge of the worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to mortals who are willing to be led,

> a teacher of gods and men, a blessed one, a *buddha.* He, by himself, thoroughly understands, and sees this universe, face to face, as it were – including the worlds above with the gods, . . . and he then makes his knowledge known to others. He proclaims the Truth both in the letter and in the spirit, lovely in its origin, lovely in its progress, lovely in its consummation: he makes known the higher life, in all its purity and in all its perfection.
>
> "The *tathāgata* can show you the way to that which is contrary to the five great hindrances. The *tathāgata* lets his mind pervade the four quarters of the world with thoughts of love. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere will continue to be filled with love, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure. Just as a mighty trumpeter makes himself heard – and that without difficulty – in all the four quarters of the earth, even so is the coming of the *tathāgata:* there is not one living creature that the *tathāgata* passes by or leaves aside, but regards them all with mind set free, and deep-felt love."
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 13, Tevijja Sutta, PTSD1 pp.249–51; cf. in BGPC pp.142–43, DBRD pp.316–17*

His being is in paradise, even while he lives in this world:

> In truth, there is such a happy paradise. But the country is spiritual, and is accessible only to those who are spiritual. You say it lies in the west. This means, look for it where he who enlightens the world resides. . . . Your description of paradise is beautiful; yet it is insufficient, and does little justice to the glory of the pure land. . . . Only he can reach the happy land whose soul is filled with the infinite light of Truth. Only he who has attained enlightenment can live and breathe in the spiritual atmosphere of the western paradise. I tell you, the *tathāgata* lives in the pure land of eternal bliss even now while he is still in the body. The *tathāgata* preaches the *Dharma* to you and to the whole world, so that you and your brothers may attain the same peace, the same happiness.
>
> *Amitābha Sūtra, Selections; cf. in BGPC pp.173–74*

It is often said in Buddhist texts that the Buddha did not try to answer questions concerning those things that are best experienced, and cannot really be understood conceptually or by means of intellect. Such questions are epitomized by the four undeclared issues or unexpounded things *(avyākṛita-vastu)* – questions that the Buddha never answered. These questions are: (1) Is the world eternal, or not, or both, or neither? (2) Is the world infinite in space, or not, or both, or neither? (3) Does the *tathāgata* exist after death,

or not, or both, or neither? (4) Is the soul *(ātman)* identical with the body or different from it?

Several of the *sūtras* record attempts to persuade the Buddha to provide answers to these questions, but the Buddha makes no reply because – since these things cannot be understood intellectually – any conceptual answer that is given might lead to the false notion that something fundamental has actually been understood. The Buddha regarded the attempt to answer such questions as speculation – something he did not encourage – and as distractions from the very practical task of meditation and overcoming human imperfections. Of course, this has not prevented intellectuals from trying to analyse why the Buddha did not reply to such questions, forgetting perhaps that such intellectual analysis and speculation were the very things that he taught should be avoided.

"All of these (questions)," say the *sūtras,* a monk *(bhikkhu)* "has thrown off, shaken off, renounced, vomited up, let go, abandoned, and relinquished."[4] "Understanding this, he is not paralysed, does not quake, and does not shiver or shake over the undeclared issues."[5] That is to say, a monk who has understood the limitations of the intellect and conceptual thought is undisturbed by the absence of answers to these questions. What the Buddha did point out was the reality of suffering, and the *Dhamma* (Pa. Way) as the means to surmount it:

> Having directly known It, I teach the *Dhamma* to my disciples for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the disappearance of pain and distress, for the practice of the right means, and for the realization of *nibbāna.*
>
> *Anguttara Nikāya 10:95, Uttiya Sutta, PTSA5 p.194; cf. ANTB*

When asked why he did not provide answers to such questions, he is said to have replied, "because they are not conducive . . . to *nibbāna.* That is why I have declared them as uncertain."[6] Or more extensively:

> When they say: "Why has the Samaṇa Gotama not revealed this?" They should be told: "Friend, this is not conducive to your welfare or to (following) the *Dhamma,* or to the higher holy life, or to disenchantment (with the world), dispassion, cessation, tranquillity, realization, enlightenment, or *nibbāna.* That is why the Lord has not revealed it."
>
> And when they say: "Well, friend, what *has* the holy man Gotama revealed?" They should be told: "'This is suffering' has been declared by the Lord; 'This is how suffering arises,' . . . 'This is the cessation of suffering,' . . . and, 'This is the path leading to the cessation of suffering' have been declared by the Lord."
>
> *Dīgha Nikāya 29, Pāsādika Sutta, PTSD3 p.136; cf. TBLD p.437*

Metaphysical speculations, says the Buddha in conversation with the itinerant *Vacchagotta,* are simply a "thicket of views":

> BUDDHA: Vaccha, the speculative view that the world is eternal is a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a vacillation of views, a fetter of views. It is beset by suffering, by vexation, by despair, and by fever, and it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to *nibbāna.*... Seeing this danger, I do not take up any of these speculative views.
>
> VACCHA: Then does Master Gotama hold any speculative view at all?
>
> BUDDHA: Vaccha, 'speculative view' is something that the Tathāgata has discarded. For the Tathāgata, Vaccha, has seen this: 'Such is material form, such its origin, such its disappearance; such is feeling, such its origin, such its disappearance; such is perception, such its origin, such its disappearance; such are formations, such their origin, such their disappearance; such is consciousness, such its origin, such its disappearance.' Therefore, I say, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of all conceptions, all excogitations, all I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit, the Tathāgata is liberated through not clinging.
>
> *Majjhima Nikāya 72, Aggivacchagotta Sutta,*
> *PTSM1 pp.485–86; cf. MDBB pp.591–92*

In short, a *buddha,* a *tathāgata,* has fully understood the world, the heavenly realms, the gods, and everything else in existence, and has no need of speculation. Whatever can be explained and which is beneficial to his disciples, he will explain. Otherwise, he will keep quiet:

> *Bhikkhus* (monks), the world has been fully understood by the Tathāgata; the Tathāgata is released from the world. The origin of the world has been fully understood by the Tathāgata; the origin of the world has been abandoned by the Tathāgata. The cessation of the world has been fully understood by the Tathāgata.... The course leading to the cessation of the world has been fully understood by the Tathāgata....
>
> *Bhikkhus,* in the world with its *devas, māras,* and *brahmās,* with its recluses and *brāhmaṇs,* among humankind with its princes and people, whatever is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, attained, sought, and reflected upon by the mind – that is fully understood by the Tathāgata: that is why he is called the Tathāgata.

Bhikkhus, from the night when the Tathāgata awakened to unsurpassed full enlightenment until the night when he passes away into the *nibbāna*-element with no residue left, whatever he speaks, utters, and explains – all that is just so and not otherwise: that is why he is called the Tathāgata.

As the Tathāgata says, so does he do; as the Tathāgata does, so does he say: that is why he is called the Tathāgata.

In the world with its *devas, māras* (devils) and *brahmās,* with its *samaṇas* (holy men) and *brāhmaṇs,* among humanity with its princes and people, the Tathāgata is the conqueror, unvanquished, seer of everything, having power over everything: that is why he is called the Tathāgata.

By direct knowledge of the whole world,
the whole world as it truly is –
He is released from all the world,
in all the world he is unattached.

The all-conquering heroic sage,
freed from every bond –
He has reached that perfect peace,
nibbāna, free from fear.

Rid of mental impurities *(khīṇāsava),* he is enlightened,
trouble-free, with doubts destroyed –
He has reached the final end of action,
released by the complete destruction of clinging.

Itivuttaka 112, Lokāvabodha Sutta, PTSI pp.121–23; cf. KNJI

See also: **buddha**, **tathāgata-garbha** (▸1).

1. Nāgārjuna, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Shāstra* 15:9.
2. *Cf. Ratnagotra-vibhāga* 3:15.3.9–15; *Vajrachchhedikā Sūtra* 18.
3. See Garma Chang, *Buddhist Teaching of Totality, BTOT* pp.54–55 (n.27); Khenpo Chöga, *Drops of Nectar* 56–61, *DNK1* pp.322–23; *Ratnagotra-vibhāga* 3:15.3.9–15, *SRVU* pp.341–42.
4. *Anguttara Nikāya* 10:20, *Ariyavāsa Sutta, PTSA5* p.31, *ANTB.*
5. *Anguttara Nikāya* 7:51, *Avyākata Sutta, PTSA4* p.69; *cf. ANTB;* see also *Majjhima Nikāya* 63 *(Cūlamālunkya Sutta),* 72 *(Aggivacchagotta Sutta), PTSM1* pp.426–32, 483–89.
6. *Dīgha Nikāya* 9, *Poṭṭhapāda Sutta, PTSD1* p.191, *TBLD* p.165.

teacher (Gk. *didaskalos*) In mysticism, a spiritual master, a spiritual teacher; in religion, a teacher of religious principles; a title commonly used for Jesus and gnostic masters during the early centuries of Christianity; often contrasted with false teachers, usually identified, it should be said, as those who taught something different to the belief system of the accuser! From a purely mystical perspective, a true teacher would be one who has reached the highest level of spiritual enlightenment. It is understandable that spiritual teachers can only guide their disciples to the level that they themselves have attained. A false teacher would be someone who claims to have attained a degree of spiritual enlightenment that he has not in fact attained. He may be deluded, yet sincere in his belief, or he may be a charismatic charlatan.

Mysticism is the practical exploration of consciousness or being. As such, its experiences cannot be contained in words. And although some individuals may be born with a greater spiritual propensity than others, and may even enjoy spiritual experiences to a greater or lesser extent, the full development of this potential is greatly aided by the touch of person to person, of being to being. It is no surprise, therefore, to discover that the tradition of every teacher having his own spiritual teacher or guide exists in all branches of mysticism. Mystic teaching is always by word of mouth, by example, and by personal association. In fact, a number of mystics have been so aware of the impossibility of conveying mystical knowledge in the written word, and of the endless ways in which mystical writings can be misunderstood that many teachers declined to write anything themselves. Among these have been the Buddha, Socratēs, John the Baptist, Jesus, Ammonius Saccas, Plotinus, and Epictetus.

The intellectual Platonist Longinus (*c.*213–272) lists a number of Greek Stoic and Peripatetic teachers whose message bordered on the mystical, and who also had no wish to leave behind any written expression of their teachings:

> Among Stoic teachers that refrained from writing we have Herminus and Lysimachus, and the two living at Athens, Musonius and Athenaeus; among Peripatetics, Ammonius and Ptolemaeus.
>
> The two last were the most accomplished scholars of their time, Ammonius especially being unapproached in breadth of learning; but neither produced any systematic work; we have from them merely verses and duty speeches; and these I cannot think to have been preserved with their consent; they did not concern themselves with a formal statement of their doctrine, and it is unlikely that they would have wished to be known in aftertimes by a composition of so trivial a nature.
>
> *Longinus, On the End, in Porphyry, On the Life of Plotinus 20; cf. in PEP p.cxviii*

In Christianity, the title ‘teacher’ is used not only for Jesus, but also for his apostles and others. In John’s gospel, Jesus is described as a “teacher *(didaskalos)* come from God”:

> There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher for his apostles and others, for no man can do these miracles that you do, except God be with him."
>
> *John 3:1–2; cf. KJV*

Many other Christians have referred to Jesus as their teacher. As Angela of Foligno puts it:

> The Son of God is given to us as a pattern and an exemplar, a teacher and master, that we might learn to despise the glory of this world and, not only that we might not seek after it, but that we might refuse it, even if it were offered to us.
>
> *Angela of Foligno, Book of Divine Consolation 2:13; cf. BDC p.68*

The English mystic Richard Rolle, who never became ordained as a priest and who was no doubt criticized on this account by some of the clergy, responds to his critics that the highest teacher is the Christ within:

> But those who have acquired their learning not directly but second-hand, and who are puffed up with their complicated arguments, say scornfully, "Where did he learn all this? To which teacher has he been listening?" They do not believe that lovers of eternal love can be taught by an inner teacher to speak more eloquently than those taught by men who have spent their whole lives studying for empty honours. But if the Holy Spirit inspired many people in days gone by, why should he not raise his lovers to contemplate the joy of God today?
>
> *Richard Rolle, Fire of Love 33; cf. FLML (2:3) p.142, FLRR p.149*

Clement of Alexandria says in a number of places that this inner Christ, the Son of God, is the Word, which is the true teacher of the soul:[1]

> He alone is teacher *(didaskalos)* who is the only Son of the Most High Father, the instructor of men.
>
> *Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies 4:25, WCA2 p.215*

Indeed, the Word is the only natural teacher of souls, since it is from that divine power that they have all sprung:

> The Son is the Power *(Dynamis)* of God, as being the Father's most ancient Word *(Logos)* before the production of all things, and His Wisdom. He is then properly called the teacher *(didaskalos)* of the beings formed by Him.
>
> *Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies 7:2, WCA2 p.411*

He also says that human teachers are inherently unreliable, the only true source of wisdom being the Divine:

> But let those who boast of having apprehended the truth tell us from whom they boast of having heard it. They will not say from God, but will admit that it was from men. . . . But human teachers *(didaskaloi),* as men speaking of God, are unreliable. For he that is man cannot worthily speak the truth concerning God: feeble and mortal man cannot speak worthily of the Unoriginated and Incorruptible. . . . The only wisdom, therefore, is the God-taught wisdom we possess.
>
> *Clement of Alexandria, Miscellanies 6:18; cf. WCA2 pp.403–4*

In a similar vein, Johann Tauler speaks of listening very carefully to the sermons of a preacher and coming away so full of "false notions" that it took him a long while to be rid of them. He goes on to say that for a divine teacher to teach human beings, he must be an empty vessel waiting to be filled:

> It often happened that when I came away from the sermon, I brought certain false notions away with me, which I hardly got rid of in a long while with great toil. But if the highest teacher of all Truth shall come to a man, he must be empty and quit of all the things of time. Know that when this same master comes to me, He teaches me more in an hour than you or all the doctors from Adam to Judgment Day will ever do.
>
> *Johann Tauler, Life 3; cf. HLT pp.50–51*

The same understanding was prevalent in the gnostic tradition of early Christianity. As the writer of the *Teachings of Silvanus* says, speaking of Christ:

> The divine teacher is with you always. He is a helper, and he meets you because of the good that is in you.
>
> *Teachings of Silvanus 96–97; cf. TS pp.36–39*

In Manichaeism, Mānī is the divine teacher, while those appointed to give his teachings, such as Mār Ammo and Mār Zakū, were also described as teachers, *mār* meaning 'teacher' or 'master'. In later Manichaeism, 'teacher' became a designation in the hierarchy of the Manichaean Church. In a Manichaean hymn, an unspecified saviour is described as the "teacher of the compassionate":

> You are the master physician,
> teacher of the compassionate;
> Through your love you bring joy to those whom you accept.
>
> *Manichaean Text, TMC3 p.24; cf. GSR p.295*

Similarly, among the Mandaean texts, the patriarch and saviour *Shishlam-Rba* is described as the "teacher of *'uthras* (pure spiritual beings)".[2]

See also: **master**, **teacher of righteousness**, **ẓaddik**.

1. See also Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 2:2, 5:1, 3, *WCA2* pp.6, 220, 224, 230–31, *passim.*
2. *Mandaean Prayer Book* 311, 318, *CPM* pp.223, 225.

teacher of righteousness, **righteous teacher** (He. *moreh ha-ẓedek*) Teacher *(moreh)* of righteousness *(ẓedek),* teacher of virtue; a title given to the spiritual leader mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls[1] and (it is hence presumed) used by members of the community who lived in the settlement at Khirbet Qumran (*c.*200 BCE – 100 CE) near where the scrolls were found. See **moreh ha-ẓedek**.

1. *Dead Sea Scrolls* 4Q265–273, 5Q12, 6Q15.

tertön (T) *Lit.* one who reveals *(ston)* treasure *(gter)* or hidden treasure *(gter ma);* a phonetic rendering of *gter ston;* revealer, finder, or discoverer of hidden treasures; revealer of hidden *dharma* treasure; an inspired teacher, the recipient of a revelation concerning the *Dharma* (the Buddhist Way and teachings) either in deep meditation, in a dream, in a seemingly external vision, from a deity, by being guided to find a hidden text, or in some other way; commonly used as a title. Many *tertöns* started new lineages of Buddhist teachers.

Gter ma (often romanized as *terma*) means a hidden treasure, which can refer to a spiritual revelation or to inspiration received through the teachings contained in a book or text previously concealed and subsequently rediscovered by the *tertön. Termas* can also be relics or some other sacred object. Texts, teachings and objects can be discovered in caves or other physical locations, or they may take the form of 'mind-treasures *(dgongs gter)*', revealed directly within the mindstream of the *tertön.*

A *tertön* would find a book through inspiration of various kinds, sometimes being guided to a particular location by a *ḍākinī. Ḍākinīs* are female beings or deities originating in the Hindu pantheon, who became integral to Tibetan Buddhism, where they represent the energy of enlightenment, possessing the potential to manifest in a variety of ways – as spiritual guides, protectors of the *Dharma,* embodiments of enlightenment, and so on. As a written text, a *terma* often takes the form of an ancient scroll containing just a few symbols written in a *ḍākinī* script, which only a *tertön* of the same spiritual ancestry as the *terma* can interpret.

Although largely an aspect of the *Nyingma* tradition, the principle of the *tertön* and the *terma* has been adopted by other schools. According to the *Nyingma* school, the practice of burying texts began with Padmasambhava, a *guru* of the Indian *siddha* tradition, credited with introducing tantric Buddhism into Tibet. *Tertöns* are believed to be reincarnations of twenty-five close or 'heart' disciples of Padmasambhava. Foreseeing the ongoing degeneration of humanity, Padmasambhava concealed hundreds of texts, relics and other objects designed to protect the *Dharma* during times of decline when found by reincarnations of his *tertöns.*

Among these twenty-five disciples were five women, each of whom compiled an account of their *guru*'s teachings, hiding the books in various places for the benefit of future generations. One of these women, the princess Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal, is said to have possessed extraordinary powers of memory, and could remember everything she was told. She collected everything she had heard from her *guru* into a book, which she called the *Padma Thangyig Serteng* ('Golden Rosary'), and hid it. The book was discovered some six hundred years later by a fourteenth-century *tertön* Karma Lingpa. 'Lingpa', meaning 'island', is commonly added to a *tertön*'s name, indicating that he is an island refuge in the midst of the sea of suffering.

Perhaps the most well-known example in the West of a book-*terma* is the *Bardo Thödol* ('Liberation through Hearing during the Intermediate State'), a text of which there are many variants among different groups, and which is popularly known in English as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead.* The book is intended as a guide to beings at the time of their death, to help them remain peaceful and without fear during their transition from one body to another. It is said to have been composed by Padmasambhava, written down by Khandro Yeshe Tsogyal, buried in the Gampo hills of central Tibet, and rediscovered by Karma Lingpa.

Tertöns of the *Nyingma* tradition are commonly regarded as 'mindstream' incarnations of the twenty-five close disciples of Padmasambhava, and the mind-*termas* associated with each disciple are automatically revealed within the 'mindstream' of the *tertön*'s present incarnation. Upon receiving the revelation of a *terma,* many *tertöns* either established a new *terma* lineage or declared themselves (or were so declared by others) to be reincarnations of a previous *tertön.* Two ways of *dharma* transmission thus came into existence – the 'long' way of oral transmission in an unbroken lineage of *guru* to disciple, and the 'short' or 'whispered' transmission, arising from the inspiration received by a *tertön* and the revelation of a *terma.*

The first *tertön* and discoverer of a *terma* is said to have been Nyingma Sangye Lama (*c.*1000–1080), followed by many others. The fifth *Dalai Lama* Lobsang Gyatso (1617–1682), who established the political power of the *Dalai Lama* lineage, is understood to have been a great *tertön.* Regarded as an astute political as well as religious leader, he oversaw an era of religious,

social, and artistic strength. With the passage of time, a widespread network of *tertön* transmission lineages came into existence.

A well-known *tertön* of recent times, Orgyen Kusum Lingpa (1934–2009), claimed that his previous incarnations had included the Indian *mahāsiddha* Drilbupa and the Tibetan Lhalung Pelgyi Dorje, the close disciple of Padmasambhava who assassinated the anti-Buddhist *Bön* emperor Langdarma in 842 CE, on the instructions (so it is said) of Palden Lhamo, the principal guardian deity or *dharmapāla* of Tibet. Orgyen Kusum Lingpa also claimed to be a reincarnation of 'crazy wisdom' Buddhist yogi, Drugpa Kunleg (1455–1529), who claimed to use sex with women as a means to their enlightenment, and whose exploits, given the opportunity, Orgyen Kusum Lingpa was happy to recount.

Orgyen Kusum Lingpa's acknowledged successor is his son Tulku Hungkar Dorje (*b.*1969), who was recognized by his father and other Buddhist *lamas,* including the *Dalai Lama,* as an incarnation *(tulku)* of Khyentse Yeshe Dorje (1800–1866), the mind-emanation of the great *Nyingma Dzogchen tertön* Jigme Lingpa (1729–1798). Since 1994, Hungkar Dorje has been abbot of the Lung Ngon Thubten Chokhorling Monastery in Tibet, and has been significantly instrumental in the furtherance of Buddhist education in Tibet.[1]

See also: **tulku**.

1. See "Orgyen Kusum Lingpa," *Wikipedia,* ret. May 2013.

ṭhag (H), **ṭhagg** (H/Pu) *Lit.* a thief, robber, cut-throat, thug, deceiver, imposter, cheat, swindler, confidence trickster; strangler; from the Sanskrit *sthaga* (cunning, sly, fraudulent, dishonest), from *sthag* (to conceal); also, a member of a now nonexistent association of robbers and assassins in India (the *ṭhagīs*), who carried out their practices as worshippers of *Kālī,* the goddess of destruction, and who strangled their victims. 'Thug' is an anglicization of *ṭhag,* which has passed into the English language as a word referring to a criminally, and often mindlessly violent person. The *ṭhagīs* were eradicated during the time of the British Raj through the efforts of William Sleeman, a civil servant.

Indian *sants* have used the term metaphorically in a variety of contexts. The underlying characteristic of a *ṭhag* is his ability to trick and deceive. Kabīr, living in Vārāṇasī, stronghold of Hindu religion, describes the priests of his time as *ṭhags,* for they promise salvation after death while at the same time taking money and other gifts from their flock. He calls them the "thugs of Vārāṇasī":

> They wear loincloths, three and a half yards long,
> and triple-wound sacred threads.

They have rosaries around their necks,
 and they carry glittering jugs in their hands.
They are not called saints *(sant)* of the Lord,
 they are the thugs *(ṭhag)* of *Vārāṇasī.*

Kabīr, Ādi Granth 476, AGK

The Indian Sufi Bulleh Shāh speaks similarly of Muslim clerics:

My life is wrapped in troubles!
In sleep, I became separated from You;
Waking, I have lost trace of You;
Isolated, I have been robbed, my Lord!
Thieves and dacoits have surrounded me.

Mullāns and *qāżīs* mislead me through the labyrinth of religious rituals.
They are thugs *(ṭhagg),* hunters of sparrows,
 who have cast their nets on all four sides.
They teach me the so-called ways of piety,
 which serve as fetters around my ankles. . . .

O Bullah, you will realize the Lord for sure:
 boldly announce this to your heart.
The Beloved is right within you!
Whom do you seek outside?
Why be deluded in broad daylight?

Bulleh Shāh, Kalām, KBSA p.15, SBSU pp.209–10; cf. BSPS pp.182–83

The metaphor has also been used in positive ways. Bulleh Shāh calls his master ʿInāyat Shāh the "beloved thug *(ṭhagg)* of Lahore", complaining that his master has robbed him by his love:

Strike not the bargain of love, never be taken in by its guiles:
It gives no peace, neither in forest nor city. . . .
He showed his face and went on his way –
 suddenly a noose had been slid round my neck.
Then he showed no concern for me:
 oh, I have met the beloved thug *(ṭhagg)* of Lahore!

Bulleh Shāh, Kullīyāt 143, KBS pp.309–10, SBSU pp.435–36; cf. BSPS pp.246–47

Ṭhag has also been used by Indian *sants* to portray the deceptive charm of *māyā* (illusion). More specifically, human passions have been described as *ṭhags,* as too have friends and relatives. All of these beguile the mind and absorb its attention, with the result that the soul forgets its divine purpose

and is reborn in another material body, facing death once again in the cycle of transmigration.

See also: **ṭhag** (▸4).

Therapeutai (Gk) *Lit.* healers, attendants; worshippers; a first-century Jewish community of contemplatives, a group of whom – of unknown origin and fate – are said by the first-century Alexandrian Jew Philo Judaeus to have settled on the shores of Lake Mareotis near Alexandria. The *Therapeutai* are known only from Philo's description in *On the Contemplative Life,* where he contrasts them with another spiritually minded group, the Essenes of Judaea, who, he says, lived an active life.

Philo begins by assuring his reader that he will adhere closely to the facts, without embellishment, as "poets and historians" generally do through lack of actual evidence:

> I have discussed the Essenes,[1] who persistently pursued the active life and excelled in all or, to put it more moderately, in most departments (of their lifestyle). I will now proceed at once . . . to say what is needed concerning those who have embraced the life of contemplation. And in so doing, I will not draw any fictitious statements out of my own head for the sake of improving upon the facts – as is constantly done by poets and historians through lack of excellence in the lives and practices that they record – but shall adhere absolutely to the actual truth – something which I know that even the greatest masters of oratory do not keep close to in their speeches. Even so, we must persevere and not shirk the effort, for the magnitude of virtue shown by these men must not be allowed to tie the tongues of those who hold that nothing excellent should be passed over in silence.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 1; cf. PCW9 pp.112–13, WPJ4 p.1*

He then begins by speaking of the *Therapeutai* in a general way. First, he discusses the origins of their name, and the focus of their worship:

> The vocation of these philosophers is at once made clear from their designation of *Therapeutai* and *Therapeutrides,* a name derived from *therapeuō.* This is meant either in the sense of 'cure' – for they profess an art of healing better than that current in the cities, which heals only the bodies, while theirs also treats souls oppressed with grievous and well-nigh incurable diseases, inflicted upon them by pleasures and desires, griefs and fears, covetousness, folly and injustice, and the countless host of other passions and vices; or else it is intended in the

> sense of 'worship', because nature and the sacred laws have schooled them to worship the Self-Existent – who is better than the Good, purer than the One, and more primordial than the *Monad.* Who among those who profess piety deserve to be compared with them?
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 1; cf. PCW9 pp.112–15, WPJ4 pp.1–2*

They are, he says, deeply devoted to their desire for the "vision of the Existent":

> It is well that the *Therapeutai,* a people always taught from the first to use their sight, should desire the vision of the Existent, and soar above the sun of our senses, and never leave their place in this company which carries them on to perfect happiness. Those who apply themselves to this kind of worship, do so not by tradition or on the advice or recommendation of others, but because they are carried away by a heaven-sent love, remaining rapt and possessed like so many revellers in bacchanalian or corybantian mysteries, until they see the Object of their yearning.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 2; cf. PCW9 pp.118–19, WPJ4 pp.3–4*

To this end, they entirely relinquish their worldly life:

> Such is their yearning for the deathless and blessed life that, thinking that their mortal life has already ended, they abandon their possessions to their sons or daughters or to other kinsfolk, thus advancing the time of their inheritance with willing cheerfulness; while those who have no kinsfolk give their possessions to comrades and friends. . . .
>
> So when they have divested themselves of their possessions and no longer have anything to ensnare them, they flee without a backward glance and leave their brothers, their children, their wives, their parents, the wide circle of their kinsfolk, the affectionate bands of friends around them, and the native lands in which they were born and raised – for familiarity is a most attractive bond and very great its power to ensnare. And they depart, not to another city, . . . but instead, they take up their abode outside the walls, pursuing solitude in gardens or lonely parts of the country, not from any acquired habit of ill-natured misanthropy, but because they know how unprofitable and mischievous are associations with persons of dissimilar dispositions.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 2; cf. PCW9 pp.124–25, WPJ4 pp.4–5*

There are, he says, many of "this kind . . . in the inhabited world", but the best community known to him is near Lake Mareotis:

> This kind exists in many places in the inhabited world, for perfect Good must needs be shared both by Greeks and the world outside Greece, but it abounds in Egypt in each of the nomes, as they are called, and especially around Alexandria. And the best of these votaries journey from every side to settle in a certain very suitable place which they regard as their fatherland. This place is situated above the Mareotic Lake lying in a somewhat level plain a little raised above the surroundings, being suitable for their purpose by reason of its security and the pleasantly tempered air.
>
> Its safety is secured by the farm buildings and villages round about, and the pleasant temperature of the air from the continuous breezes that arise both from the lake, which opens out into the sea, and from the open sea nearby. For the sea breezes are light, the lake breezes brisk, the two combining together to produce a most healthy climate.
>
> The houses of the society thus collected are exceedingly simple, providing protection against two of the most pressing dangers – the fiery heat of the sun and the icy cold of the air. And they are neither close together as in cities, since living at close quarters is troublesome and displeasing to people who seek to satisfy their desire for solitude; nor yet are they at a great distance from each other because of the sense of fellowship that they cherish, and because of the need to render help to one another should they should be attacked by robbers. And in each house, there is a sacred room, which is called a sanctuary, in which they retire by themselves and practise the mysteries of the holy life.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 3; cf. PCW9 pp.124–27, WPJ4 pp.5–6*

Into this sanctuary, says Philo, the community members take only those things that will remind them of the spiritual life:

> They take nothing into it, neither drink nor food nor any other of the things necessary for the needs of the body, but laws and oracles delivered through the mouth of prophets, and psalms and anything else by which knowledge and piety are brought to perfection. They keep the remembrance of God alive and never forget it, so that even in their dreams no other object comes before their eyes but the loveliness of divine virtues and powers. Indeed, many when asleep and dreaming give utterance to the glorious verities of their holy philosophy.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 3; cf. PCW9 pp.126–27, WPJ4 pp.6–7*

They pray at dawn and in the evening, spending the day "entirely in spiritual exercises". They read the "holy scriptures", seeking wisdom by interpreting the content allegorically, "since they think that the words of the literal text

are symbols of something whose hidden nature is revealed by studying the underlying meaning." As exemplars of this allegorical method of interpretation, they also have the writings of the founders of their way. Moreover:

> They do not confine themselves solely to contemplation, but they also compose hymns and psalms to God in every kind of metre and melody imaginable, which of necessity they arrange in a more dignified rhythm. And for six days, they meditate (*lit.* philosophize) by themselves in solitude in the sanctuaries mentioned, never going outside the threshold of the outer court, and indeed never even looking out.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 3; cf. PCW9 pp.128–31, WPJ4 p.7*

In this way, six days a week, they live solitary lives, until they meet together solemnly on the seventh to listen to a discourse, unencumbered by rhetoric, by the member most skilled in their teachings:

> Then the eldest of them, who also has the most profound understanding of their teachings, comes forward and, with visage and voice both quiet and composed, gives a well-reasoned and wise discourse. He makes no exhibition of clever rhetoric, like the orators of old or the sophists of today, but carefully investigates and explains their doctrines in great detail; and this does not rest upon the tips of the audience's ears, but penetrates through their hearing into the soul, and there stays lastingly. And all of them sit still and listen, showing their assent merely by their looks or nods.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 3; cf. PCW9 pp.130–31, WPJ4 pp.7–8*

Women and men are both present, separated by a low wall, which preserves "the modesty becoming the female sex", while at the same time letting them hear the discourse.

They eat only at night, and some eat only every three or six days, but on the seventh day after the discourse, they assemble in a common sanctuary, and eat a communal meal, consisting of bread and salt, flavoured perhaps with hyssop. Their drink is spring water. They drink no wine, and no animal flesh is served. Excess is regarded as an enemy of body and soul. They have no servants or slaves, but the younger members are eager to serve their fellows. Their clothing is likewise of the simplest form, "a thick coat of shaggy skin in winter, and in summer a vest or linen shirt".

Seven is considered a sacred number, and even more so its square, seven times seven. Thus, on the eve of every fiftieth day, they have a more extensive festival. After the discourse, they all take turns in singing a hymn, following which they have their communal meal. Afterwards, singing hymns and psalms together in varied melodies and rhythms, some of their own composition,

some antiphonal, they keep a sacred vigil until dawn, following which they return to their solitude to continue their spiritual practice:

> The choir of the *Therapeutai* of either sex, note in response to note and voice to voice, the treble of the women blending with the bass of the men, create a harmonious concert, and a truly musical symphony. Lovely are the thoughts, lovely the words, and worthy of reverence the choristers, and the end and aim of these thoughts, words and choristers alike is devotion. Thus they continue until dawn, intoxicated with this intoxication in which there is no shame; then, not with heavy heads or drowsy eyes, but more alert and wakeful than when they came to the banquet, they stand with their faces and whole body turned to the east; and when they see the rising sun, they raise their hands to heaven, praying for light and for understanding of the truth, and the power of keen intelligence. And after their prayers, they retire each to his own private sanctuary, once more to ply the trade and till the field of the philosophy to which they habitually devote themselves.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 11; cf. PCW9 pp.166–69, WPJ4 p.20*

Philo then ends this eulogistic treatise with the final comment:

> This then is what I have to say of those who are called *Therapeutai,* who have devoted themselves to the contemplation of nature and what it has to teach. They live in the soul alone, citizens of heaven and the world *(kosmos),* and acceptable to the Father and Creator of all by reason of their virtue. And this has procured for them His love as their most appropriate reward, which far surpasses all the gifts of fortune, and conducts them to the very summit and perfection of felicity.
>
> *Philo Judaeus, On the Contemplative Life 11; cf. PCW9 pp.168–69, WPJ4 p.20*

See also: **Essenes**.

1. Philo Judaeus, *Every Good Man is Born Free* 12–13, *On the Contemplative Life* 1, *Apology for the Jews* 1–18 (in Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 8:11), *PCW9* pp.52–63, 112–13, 436–43.

thilashin (Burmese) *Lit.* possessor of morality (Pa. *sīla*); a Burmese Buddhist laywoman and renunciate, recognizable by pink robes, shaven head, orange or brown shawl, and metal alms bowl; a woman who accepts the ten precepts (S. *dasha-shīla*) and lives a life very similar to that of the Buddhist novice *(shrāmaṇera),* including a daily excursion to obtain alms. Lineages that supported full ordination of women in south-east Asian countries died out many

centuries ago, but provision exists for women to receive partial ordination; similar to the *mae chee* of Thailand, the *don chi* of Cambodia, and the *dasa sil mātā* of Sri Lanka.

The *thilashin* have greater religious freedom than their Thai *mae chee* counterparts. They are permitted to observe all ten precepts of the novice *(sāmaṇera);* they can be instructed in meditation; and they are able to sit for the same academic examination as monks. They live either in separate institutions or in segregated monasteries. They are also allowed to make an alms round on the bi-weekly *Uposatha* days, and receive money or uncooked rice. They are addressed by the honorifics *Sayalay* (little teacher) and *Daw.*

Although they live a life very similar to that of a Buddhist nun *(bhikkhuṇī), thilashins* are not fully ordained. According to the *vinaya* (monastic code), ordination can only be given in the presence of a *bhikkhu* and a *bhikkhuṇī,* which is not possible due to demise of the *bhikkhuṇī* lineage. A few *thilashins* have tried to reinstate a *bhikkhuṇī* lineage, but have met with resistance from both the government and people in general, including women.[1]

Perhaps making an expedient of necessity, many *thilashins* are of the opinion that to live the life of a renunciate without ordination is the better option, since it leaves them independent of male-dominated monasteries.

See also: **dasa sil mātā**, **mae chee**.

1. See "thilashin," *Wikipedia,* July 2013.

Tīrthakar(a), **Tīrthankar(a)** (S/H) *Lit.* passage *(tīrtha)* maker *(kara),* ford maker; one who provides a crossing or a passage; one who creates a path or a way (through life); one who ferries souls across the ocean of transmigration; a Jain term for the twenty-four perfected and liberated souls who, in their own times, led others on the path to liberation, and whom Jains look upon as the spiritual fathers and exemplars of their religion; one who has attained the thirteenth *guṇasthāna* (stage on the path to enlightenment) – the stage of omniscience, when all forms of *karma* except that of the present lifetime, have been eliminated; an omniscient soul, who has attained *kevala-jñāna* (absolute knowledge, omniscience); sometimes described as an *āpta* (true) *Tīrthankaras.*

Unlike Hindu *avatāras, Tīrthankaras* are not regarded as incarnations either of a supreme Deity or of a lesser god; nor, unlike Buddhist *bodhisattvas,* have they taken a vow to help other beings find enlightenment and liberation; nor are they regarded as the creators of the universe, which is understood to be eternal and uncreated. But since *Tīrthankaras* have attained the highest perfection of the soul, and since the Jain conception of God is as a perfect being (but not as the creator or sustainer of the universe), *Tīrthankaras* may be

regarded as God in human form. Though spoken of as *paramātmans* (supreme souls), they do not become universal or omnipresent after their liberation. Rather, they are believed to remain separate and isolated, interacting with no other souls either in this world or *siddhaloka,* where they dwell. They make no response to the prayers of their devotees, although their attendant *yakshas* and *yakshīs* (male and female spirits), three of each being associated with each *Tīrthankara,* can intervene in worldly affairs.

Siddhaloka is the stage of perfected souls, who are also known in Jainism as *arhats, kevalins* and *Jinas,* only a very few of whom become *Tīrthankaras.* At the end of human life, the perfected soul, finally released from all remaining karmic accretions, becomes a *siddha,* no longer subject to rebirth. A *Tīrthankara* is born as an ordinary human being, is conceived in the normal manner, and attains enlightenment through his own effort.

The *Tīrthankaras* do not take birth in a continuous line of succession, and a span of centuries can separate one *Tīrthankara* from his predecessor. According to Jain tradition, twenty-four *Tīrthankaras* appear in every *kalpa* (age, cycle of time) to teach the true faith to human beings and lead them to liberation. In Jain understanding, the universe is eternal and time is a continuum, moving like the rim of a cartwheel; the cosmic wheel of time *(kālachakra)* rotates ceaselessly. *Tīrthankaras* take birth in various places throughout the *madhyaloka* (middle realm) of the universe, where conditions are neither too bad nor too good for human beings to be interested in following a spiritual path.

This particular part of the universe *(Bharata-Kshetra)* is subject to ascending *(utsarpiṇī)* and descending *(avasarpiṇī)* phases or half cycles. In the ascending phase, physical and mental life improve, including health, longevity, strength, happiness, and the supporting environmental conditions such as climate. In the descending phase, things deteriorate. Each of these two main phases is subdivided into six unequal epochs *(aras).* All twenty-four of the *Tīrthankaras* are born in the third and fourth epochs of each half cycle, at a time when conditions are neither at their best nor worst. In the ascending half cycle, they are getting better; in the descending half cycle, they are getting worse. Because the universe is regarded as eternal, there have effectively been an infinite number of *Tīrthankaras* in the past, and as there will be in the future.

The last *Tīrthankara* was born at the end of the fourth epoch of the descending half cycle, followed within three years or so by the fifth epoch, which includes the present time. Because *Tīrthankaras* cannot be born during the present epoch, there are currently no living *Tīrthankaras* in this part of the universe, and hence no souls can attain omniscience and liberation. In Jain cosmogony, however, there are other parts of the universe not subject to the cycling of time *(e.g. Mahāvideha),* where conditions are always propitious for *Tīrthankaras* to take birth, and where liberation remains possible. Jains

believe that there is always a living *Tīrthankara* somewhere in the universe, though not necessarily in this part of it.

In the absence of any authentic historical detail, the life stories of the *Tīrthankaras* are stereotyped, mythological, and largely resemble each other. Their mothers experience auspicious dreams around the time of conception; they receive reminders of their destinies from the *devas* (deities), who advise them when the time has come to renounce the householder's life; and they have a strong mental and physical physique, necessary for undergoing the renunciation and austerities required in order to eliminate the *karma* that has entered their soul after long ages of transmigration, and attain enlightenment.

After attaining omniscience, *Tīrthankaras* deliver their first discourse by making a unique, divine sound *(divya-dhvāni)* in an assembly hall built for them by the gods. Around them, they collect a group of disciples, a part of whose duty is to compile the teachings of the *Tīrthankara* into scriptures *(āgamas).* When their time of death arrives, they practise particular forms of meditation *(dhyāna)* before leaving the body and rising to the summit of the inhabited universe *(siddhaloka),* where they dwell for all eternity as free, liberated, and perfected beings *(siddhas)* in a state of pure consciousness and bliss.

Differences concerning *Tīrthankaras* exist between the two main schools of Jainism, the *Shvetāmbara* and *Digambara. Digambaras* maintain that they were all men, were conceived in the womb of a woman of the *kshatriya* caste, and practised nudity from the time of their renunciation. *Shvetāmbaras* believe that Mallinātha, the nineteenth *Tīrthankara,* was a woman; that only the first and the last practised nudity; and that Mahāvīra was conceived in the womb of a *brāhmaṇ* woman, but transferred to the womb of a *kshatriya.*

According to the *Digambaras,* the body of a *Tīrthankara* is like pure crystal, lacking the normal basic bodily constituents such as blood and so on. He is not subject to disease or feelings such as hunger. He has no need to eat, but is instead nourished directly by a form of subtle matter. He is utterly withdrawn from the world, and teaches by means of a sacred sound *(divya-dhuni)* emanating from his body.

Shvetāmbaras maintain that after attainment of *kevala-jñāna,* a *Tīrthankara*'s skin and blood become pure white, his hair ceases to grow, and his eating and evacuation are invisible. Nonetheless, a *kevalin* still experiences bodily feelings such as hunger, and still requires the nourishment obtained by eating; but no sensual pleasure is associated with his eating.[1]

Other miraculous characteristics attributed to the *Tīrthankaras* include: his speech is resonant, musical, eloquent, beautiful, logical, grammatical, profoundly meaningful, succinct and to the point, *etc.,* and can be heard with undiminishing volume and clarity to a distance of one *yojana* (a mythical unit of measurement, variously calculated at between two and twenty miles); in his presence, enemies forget their differences; everyone understands him as

if he were speaking in their own language; there is no epidemic or death for a distance of twenty-five *yojanas* around him; he never encounters floods, drought, disease, *etc.;* heaps of flowers surround him, and so on.

He is also said to be born with 108 major birthmarks on his body. These include symbols such as a coconut tree, a conch shell, a pair of fishes, a fan, a flute, a well-bred horse, necklace, earring, and many more, most – if not all – being auspicious symbols or items drawn from mythology. There are, in addition, a further 900 marks, making 1,008 in all.[2]

The twenty-four Jain *Tīrthankaras* who have appeared in the present half cycle are said to have been Ṛishabha (Ādinātha), Ajitanātha, Shambhavanātha, Abhinandana, Sumatinātha, Padmaprabha, Supārshvanātha, Chandraprabha, Pushpadanta (Suvidhinātha), Shītalanātha, Shreyāmsanātha, Vāsupūjyanātha, Vimalanātha, Anantanātha, Dharmanātha, Shāntinātha, Kunthunātha, Aranātha, Mallinātha, Munisuvrata, Naminātha, Neminātha, Pārshvanātha, and Mahāvīra (Vardhamāna). On the basis of some literary and archaeological evidence, the first and the last two or possibly three *Tīrthankaras* appear to have been historical characters, but the others have been more mythological or legendary than historical. Even so, like the holy men of probably all religions, even the lives of Ṛishabha, Pārshvanātha and Mahāvīra are encompassed by legend. Accounts of their lives are nonetheless contained in the *Mahāpurāṇa,* an important Jain text largely written by Āchārya Jinasena and completed by a disciple during the ninth century CE.

The first *Tīrthankara* of the present half cycle was Ṛishabha (the 'Foremost'), and the last was Vardhamāna Mahāvīra (*c.*599–527 BCE). Mahāvīra is said to have laid down the tenets of what has become the Jain religion, and he is popularly regarded as the founder of Jainism. Like his younger contemporary, the Buddha (*c.*563–483 BCE), Mahāvīra questioned the authority of the *Vedas* and the *brāhmaṇs,* and rejected sacrificial rites. The lives of the *Tīrthankaras* are not contiguous in time, and Mahāvīra's predecessor is said have lived during the ninth century BCE.

Much tradition and mythology surrounds the life of Ṛishabha. Jain texts relate that he lived long ago. Legend has it that he lived for millions of years, overseeing significant social change before handing over the kingdom to his elder son Bharata. Adopting the ascetic life, he then practised austerities and meditation for a thousand years before attaining enlightenment. Much is clearly fantastical, and little is historically verifiable, but some modern scholars have placed him at around 2000 BCE, perhaps considerably earlier. It is possible that he was linked with the pre-Aryan Indus valley civilization (3300–1300 BCE, *fl.*2600–1900 BCE), from which figurines seated in the lotus (cross-legged) posture or in the *kāyotsarga* (standing) posture have been recovered. The *kāyotsarga* posture is particularly associated with Jainism and the Jain *Tīrthankaras.* Ṛishabha and some of the other *Tīrthankaras* are believed to have attained enlightenment while standing in this position. It is

also possible that the Jain tradition developed out of whatever Indus valley tradition produced these figurines. Many of the *Tīrthankaras* are said to have been of extraordinary size, but Ṛishabha was the tallest at 500 *dhanush* (900 metres approx.). He is said to have had two daughters and one hundred sons, all born as twins.

According to Jainism, Ṛishabha was the son of Rāja Nābhi and Mārudevī of Ayodhya, before the development of civilization as it is now understood. As a prince and king, he is credited with laying down the basics of a harmonious human society, including the family system, together with the institutions of marriage, law and order, justice, government, and basic education. He is said to have taught agriculture, animal husbandry, cooking and the manufacture of pots, various crafts and trades, and so forth. As humanity moved from a simple to a more complex social structure, he organized society into three occupational groups: agriculturists, tradesmen, and soldiers. He also taught seventy-two arts to men and sixty-four fine arts to women, including writing, painting, and music. Speaking of him as a god *(Brahmā* or *Prajāpati),* Jain texts relate that as the first *Prajāpati* ('Lord of Created Beings'), "he taught people a means of livelihood, such as agriculture,"[3] and "The first *Brahmā* (Ṛishabha) established the *Dharma* (Way, Teaching, Religion) based on compassion."[4]

There are many references to a Ṛishabha in the Hindu *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata,* as well as the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas,* especially in the Vaishnavite and Shaivite *Purāṇas,* but it is difficult with any certainty to identify him with the Jain *Tīrthankara.* In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (probably *c.*C9th CE), Ṛishabha is said to have been an incarnation *(avatāra)* of the deity *Vishṇu,*[5] his role being that of a saviour who came to teach people the path to eternal bliss and liberation. In what is probably a reference to the nudity of Jain ascetics, he is described as "clothed with the sky *(gagana-paridhāna)*", "wearing the wind", and with "the body his only possession *(sharīra-mātra)*".[6] The same text also relates that Ṛishabha was born to King Nābhi and his wife as a son who would "teach the world the sacred vows observed by the sages that have no covering on their body except the atmosphere (*vāta-rashanā,* having wind for a girdle), who lead an ascetic life, and who are pledged to perpetual celibacy."[7]

It is said that Ṛishabha's conversion to asceticism was brought about by the strange sight of a young dancer suddenly collapsing and dying at his court while in the midst of a performance. Struck with the transience and uncertainty of human existence, he crowned Bharata as his successor and renounced the world.

Ṛishabha is said to have gone to Mount Kailāsha, where he practised penance as a naked *muni.* Leading a life of great piety and purity, he became an *arahanta* (worthy one) who had conquered all passion and had destroyed all his *karma.* On attaining enlightenment, he began to preach the religion

of *ahiṃsā* (non-injury), love, and truth. He had eighty-four *gaṇadharas* (apostles) who spread his message, his son Vṛishabhasena being the first to become his spiritual messenger. His eldest daughter Brāhmī was the first to become a nun. Jain legend also credits Ṛishabha with the invention of the Brāhmī script, named after his daughter, for whom it was designed. His teachings became a part of the oral Jain tradition and were systematized by the last two *Tīrthankaras,* particularly Mahāvīra. The central part of his teaching was the recognition of the soul and, as a consequence, the sanctity of all life and the need for *ahiṃsā* (non-injury).

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* presents the teachings of Ṛishabha in the form of instructions given to his sons when he renounced the world. Ṛishabha points out that the body should be given, not to sensual pleasures, which are a source of misery, but to sublime austerities, which purify the mind and lead to the bliss of absorption in the Absolute. The wise speak of "service rendered to exalted souls *(mahat-sevā)* as an open gate to liberation". They have equipoise, are free from anger, are kindhearted and pious and consider love for God as the only object worthy of human pursuit. The body has no real or lasting reality, and is a source of misery to the *jīva* (incarnate soul). The real nature of the soul remains obscure (owing to ignorance) only so long as the *jīva* does not enquire into the truth concerning the spirit. As long as actions continue to be performed by the body, the mind remains disposed to activity, and it is due to the resulting mental turbulence that the *jīva* remains tied to a body. The spirit is thus veiled, and unless there is love for God, the *jīva* is not rid of its identification with the body. A man erroneously regards property, family and wealth as either himself or his own, but when the hard knot in the shape of mind – formed in the heart of this *jīva* by its *karma* – is loosened, then the *jīva* turns its back on worldly relationships, sheds its ego (the cause of transmigration) and, freed from all bondage, reaches the Supreme. This is achieved by adoration of the Lord, the pure Self and Preceptor.[8]

The teachings of Ṛishabha, as presented by the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* have a character more akin to Vedantic rather than Jain philosophy. In fact, it is likely that whoever wrote this portion of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* was simply using the legends of an ancient holy man to present its devotional approach to *Vishṇu* and his incarnation Kṛishṇa.

Although historical evidence for most of the other *Tīrthankaras* is lacking – the narratives in the *Mahāpurāṇa* notwithstanding – Neminātha, the twenty-second *Tīrthankara,* whom Jain tradition makes a contemporary of Kṛishṇa and the disciple of Ghora Āngirasa, is mentioned in the *Chhāndogya Upanishad.*[9] While this connection may be spurious, it has been taken to suggest that the earliest beginnings of Jainism are to be found in the culture of ascetics outside orthodox Vedic ritualism. According to the Jain *Purāṇas,* Neminātha passed away around 2,750 years before the birth of Pārshvanātha, the twenty-third *Tīrthankara.* While one might be sceptical

about this date, it seems from scholarly studies that he cannot be dismissed as entirely unhistorical.

The historical existence of Pārshvanātha is generally accepted, though the year of his birth is uncertain. Estimates generally fall some time during the first two or three centuries of the first millennium BCE. Born in Vārāṇasī, the son of Vishvasena, king of Kāshī, he was inspired by the example of Ṛishabha to renounce the world and to live a life of asceticism and meditation. After attaining *kaivalya jñāna* (knowledge of *kaivalya,* liberation), he started preaching the Jain faith. His teachings are more comprehensive than those of his predecessors. The three jewels *(triratna)* of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct, known in later Buddhism, were already a part of the Jain faith. He called upon people to observe the four vows of *ahiṃsā* (non-injury), *satya* (truth), *achaurya* or *asteya* (non-stealing), and *aparigraha* (non-possession). It is said that *aparigraha* was originally intended to include celibacy, although Mahāvīra later introduced it as a separate vow. Pārshvanātha prescribed *pratikramaṇa* (confession and repentance) for all breaches of rules committed by a *shravaṇa* (monk, ascetic). Stressing the three jewels, he pointed out the futility of ceremonies and rituals for attaining spiritual uplift.

The last *Tīrthankara* was Vardhamāna Mahāvīra. According to tradition, he was born in 599 BCE (some assign a later date in the same century) at Kuṇḍigrāma near Vaishalī, in the present-day state of Bihar. The son of the local ruler, he is said to have been married at a young age and to have renounced the world at the age of thirty to pursue the life of an ascetic. On attaining enlightenment twelve years later, he began to preach the truth he had discovered. A charismatic figure, he delivered his sermons in the language of the people, *viz.* Ardha-Māgadhī. The traditional year of Mahāvīra's death is 527 BCE, at the age of seventy-two, at which time he left behind an established community of monks, nuns, and lay people, estimated at about 14,000 members. His disciples collected his teachings into twelve volumes known as the *dvādasha-angas* ('twelve scriptures').

These teachings are a systematization of those handed down orally by the *Jinas* who had come before. They point out the exalted nature of the Self, and that the basic principles of the universe – that the *jīva* (soul) and *ajīva* (non-soul) have been closely connected with each other from the beginning; that the activities of mind, speech and body are responsible for the entanglement of the soul with *karma;* and that the remedy lies in austerities, observance of the principles of religion, and meditation.

To the four vows taught by Pārshvanātha, Mahāvīra added celibacy *(brahmacharya)* as a separate vow, taking the number to five. The same five vows were to be observed by all, but as *mahāvratas* (great vows) by monks and nuns and as *aṇuvratas* (small vows) by the laity, the difference being that the great vows were to be observed with greater rigour and thoroughness.

Mahāvīra defined eleven stages *(pratimās)* for the laity, commencing with the cultivation of right faith, and culminating in the stage of discarding most or all clothing. The regular observance of vows was essential for preventing the influx of fresh *karmas.* He also laid emphasis on sincere repentance for averting the effect of transgressions.[10]

The term *tīrthankara,* from which comes the Pali *titthiya* (heretical teacher), is also used in some early Buddhist texts as a term for teachers of other non-Buddhist schools, generally deemed heretical. Some of the Jain *Tīrthankaras* also appear in Buddhist literature as *buddhas, pacceka-buddhas* (non-teaching *buddhas*), and *bodhisattvas.* It is not known who first listed the twenty-four saints and sages of the past, named them *Tīrthankaras,* and claimed them as the lineage of Jain teachers. It is tempting to assume that the origins of Jainism as a distinct religion can be traced back to Mahāvīra, and some scholars have asserted this to be so. But the facts are unclear.

In modern Jainism, statues and other images of the *Tīrthankaras* are used as a focus for worship in Jain temples. *Tīrthankaras* are either depicted in the lotus (cross-legged) or the *kāyotsarga* (standing) posture. Several *Tīrthankaras* may be depicted together in one image or statue, sometimes all twenty-four of them. Once consecrated, an image must be worshipped daily, although not all schools of Jainism concur with the practice of image or idol worship. Until the fifth century CE, all surviving statues of the *Tīrthankaras* are unclothed. Jain worship of the *Tīrthankaras* is regarded as worship of the ideals for which they stood. The worshipper seeks no favours, for *Tīrthankaras* do not possess the power to grant gifts, although the pair of *yakshas* and *yakshīs* (male and female spirits), appointed by the deity *Indra* to attend each *Tīrthankara,* can intervene in human affairs.

See also: **arhat**, **atishaya** (7.3), **jina**.

1. See "Tīrthaṅkara," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*
2. See *Illustrated Tirthankar Charitra, ITCT.*
3. Samantabhadra, *Bṛihat-Svayambhū Stotra* 1:2.2; *cf. SSTT* p.5.
4. Nemichandra, *Trilokasāra* 802, *TAMS* p.633.
5. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 1:3, 2:7, 11:4; see Padmanabh S. Jaini, "Jina Ṛṣabha as an 'Avatāra' of Viṣṇu," *JRAV* pp.321–37.
6. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 5:5.28.
7. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 5:3.20.
8. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 5:5.1–6.
9. *Chhāndogya Upanishad* 3:17.6.
10. For many of the above details, see Georg Feuerstein, *The Yoga Tradition;* P. Jash, *Some Aspects of Jainism in Eastern India;* T.K. Tukol, *Compendium of Jainism, passim.*

tohunga, **tohuka**, **tohuna** (Mo) *Lit.* expert, adept; hence, priest, master, healer; a person of skill and proficiency trained either by another *tohunga* or in a traditional Māori *whare wānanga* (house of learning); a person chosen by the agent of an *atua* (elemental deity, ancestor deity) and by the tribe to be an expert in the particular field in which he has demonstrated an aptitude; cognate with the Hawaiian *kahuna.*

Tohunga were experts in and keepers of all forms of knowledge, esoteric and mundane. All such knowledge was regarded as extremely *tapu* (sacred), and safeguards were in place to ensure its accurate transmission and appropriate use:

> A *tohunga* was a specialist in ancient Māori lore, traditions, religion, and rituals. A *tohunga whakairo* is a master carver. A *tohunga tā moko* is a master tattooist. A *tohunga ruānuku* was a master wizard. The arts of carving and tattooing became empowered by spiritual prayer, making the operator a *tohunga* or expert of the practice like the master wizard himself. In short, the *tohunga* is a spiritual person of great power *(mana),* and may be called the priest of Māori society. This priest mediated between the divine and human world in ancient Māori society. . . .
>
> It was the role of the *tohunga* to work miracles such as healing and witchcraft, and to perform such feats as quelling the winds, calling rain, securing good weather, causing love, overcoming illness, and invoking the gods. He was a wizard and a wise man. He spoke in precepts and proverbs, echoing the words of the gods and ancestors. He was a minister of the gods, and his knowledge pertained to creation and universal laws.
>
> At one time, *tohunga* were relatively numerous. However, with the introduction of Christianity and the effect of the Tohunga Suppression Act introduced by the (British) Crown in 1908, *tohunga* diminished in numbers. Today there is only a handful left. There is an urgency to seek out those who are still *tohunga* and help carry their knowledge into the future.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK pp.10–11*

Traditional Māori *ariki* (chiefs) regarded themselves as descendants of the *atua* (ancestor deities), and there was a time when they could recite their lengthy family lineages *(whakapapa)* going back to when the *atua* had consorted with mankind. Although, in Māori thought, the supernatural dimensions of existence are understood to permeate both the physical world and human consciousness, yet the *mana* (power) of the gods was considered *tapu* (sacred), and also untouchable because of its potential danger. The powers of the supernatural realms were invoked for human purposes through magic rituals and *karakia* (invocations, incantations):

> *(Tohunga)* used *karakia* exclusively devoted to their particular avocation; the *tohunga karakia* was the special intermediary between man and his gods.
>
> *Johannes Andersen, Maori Religion, MRJA p.522*

The *tohunga* was specifically trained in these skills, and provided an open channel and link between man and the gods, thus bringing *mana* (power), *tapu* (sacredness) and the sacred acknowledgement of ancestor deities *(atua)* to all events and undertakings. These trained experts or *tohunga* presided over meetings, ceremonies, journeys, house building, carving, hunting, and so on.

Tohunga served the chiefs and the people of their own tribe, in whose protection they were highly active – its health, welfare, possessions and crops together with the placing and lifting of a *tapu,* the removal of ghosts, and so on. When tribes were at war with neighbouring tribes, *tohunga,* as representatives of their own tribe, came into direct opposition with one other, and it became necessary for them to fight to save their own lives. *Tohunga* would thus do battle using rituals, *karakia* (incantations) and the *mana* (power) of their own *atua* (deity, spirit ancestor) in order to control the outcome of disputes, conflicts, and wars:

> All human activities . . . were governed by elaborate ceremonials. The total function of magic was the continuation and preservation of the socio-political system and, as a ritual leader, the *tohunga* played a very important part toward that end. . . .
>
> But for the very reason that Māori society was so heavily impregnated with religious ideas, practices and ceremonies, the magical factor in leadership was important. This feature was intimately intertwined with primogeniture (firstborn status) and with the position of the *tohunga.*
>
> *Maharaia Winiata, Leadership in Pre-European Maori Society, LPSW p.228*

Tohunga education[1] is founded upon an understanding of the three sacred baskets *(kete)* of knowledge, traditionally believed to have been brought to humankind by the god *Tāne,* who ascended to the highest heavens and obtained them from *Io* the Most Supreme, the highest Deity. *Io* took *Tāne* into *Rangi-atea* (a temple in the twelfth heaven), where he was given the three baskets and two sacred stones. The baskets were hung on the rear wall of the first *whare kura* (house of learning, school of learning). Through subsequent generations, this sacred knowledge was handed down by rote through a lineage of initiated *tohunga,* and its accuracy meticulously preserved.

There were several kinds of Māori 'school *(whare)*' or levels of understanding within the *whare wānanga,* a general term for a Māori school as well as a term for a school of higher spiritual learning. *Whare pūrākau* (school of

sticks), for example, was the school of fighting and the use of weaponry, and the *whare mātā* was a school taught by the *tohunga whakairo* (master carver) and the *tohunga tā moko* (master tatooist). More generally, the *whare kura* was the primary class of *tohunga* learning, which taught outer knowledge and skills concerning material existence; the *whare mauri* (school of the life principle) dealt with an understanding of and the performance of magic, sorcery, and ritual; the *whare wānanga* or *whare wanaka* (school of sacred knowledge) was the highest school, the school of enlightenment, concerning itself with matters esoteric and spiritual. According to traditional belief, the *whare wānanga* was originally held in the heavens, later descending with its teachers to earth.

Although all *akoako* (students, disciples) passed through similar training in a traditional school *(whare wānanga),* each would advance to a different level of expertise, according to their individual talents and natural abilities. Their studies were divided up according to the 'contents' of the three baskets. Symbolically, the baskets were said to contain fish, and eating the fish from a particular basket would lead to the knowledge contained in that basket.

The names of these three baskets *(kete),* their order, and the description of their contents differ to some extent between tribes. Most commonly, they are known as *te kete aronui, te kete tuauri,* and *te kete tuatea. Te kete aronui* is the basket of the knowledge of *aroha* (love, peace), as well as the practical earthly skills required to maintain everyday existence. *Te kete tuauri* is the basket of sacred knowledge, which includes a knowledge of the ancient *(tuauri)* mythology concerning how creation came into being, of the hidden energies that form the substrate of material existence, and of the invocations or chants *(karakia)* and their many uses. *Te kete tuatea* is the basket of the knowledge of evil and war, and the *karakia* used for such purposes.

Writing in the early twenty-first century, Samuel Timoti Robinson of the South Island Kāi Tahu tribe, explains that, according to the Kāi Tahu, the first and lowest stage or 'school', the *whare kura,* was taught from the third basket, which in the Kāi Tahu tradition is called *te kete uruuru tau* (the basket of inner ability). This basket contained the knowledge pertaining to all things earthly. Here, the students became adepts in cultivation, arts and crafts, carving *(whakairo),* tattooing *(moko),* canoe building, fishing, hunting, and all things concerning daily life in the physical and human world. This included matters pertaining to more social aspects of human life such as teaching, child-rearing, family values, human wisdom, and so on.

The second stage, the *whare mauri,* was taught from the second basket, known as *te kete uruuru rangi* (the basket of the inner heaven), where the knowledge acquired was more mental than physical. This basket, which was itself divided into five sub-stages, contained knowledge of mythology, spiritual wisdom, the behaviour suited to chiefs, magic, sorcery, the heavens and all the deities, and the rituals and ceremonies associated with baptism, prayer, and incantation.

The third stage, the *whare wānanga,* was taught from the first basket, known as *te kete uruuru matua* (the basket of the inner parent), which was full of wisdom, inner peace, and love:

> The basket of the inner parent is most delightful and the highest of the three. This is the realm of enlightenment. One learns that the inner self is the greatest teacher, because it is the true Self that brings inner peace. All the knowledge of peace, freedom, discernment, understanding, wise philosophy, wise actions and especially the knowledge of *Io* the Most Supreme Being, are contained within it.… Here, in the highest basket, the teacher becomes the inner Self. The *tohunga ahurewa* (*tohunga* of the sacred place, priest) derives knowledge from this basket. Therefore the *whare wānanga* has its knowledge based in *te kete uruuru matua.* The fish of wisdom and understanding are eaten from it. This knowledge is understood in the *hamano* (highest soul) part of people and expressed in bliss.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK p.92*

The basket of the knowledge of evil and warfare is absent from the Kāi Tahu description of the three baskets, and is replaced by the love and peace that in other descriptions is consigned to the basket of worldly knowledge *(te kete aronui).*

With each student developing according to his natural tendencies, some became healers *(tohunga rongoā),* seers or visionaries *(tohunga mātātuhi),* diviners or prophets with second sight *(tohunga matakite),* sages and wizards *(tohunga mākutu, tohunga ruānuku),* various categories of priest in the Māori priestly hierarchy *(e.g. tohunga ahurewa, tohunga tūāhu, tohunga pouwhena, tohunga pouwhiro),* and so on. Many were simply experts in mundane affairs, such as the builder *(tohunga waihanga),* the painter *(tohunga peita),* or the botanist *(tohunga huaota).* And, as in all human societies, there were also the imposters and charlatans, or maybe just shamans of low degree *(tohunga kēhua).* Some *tohunga mākutu* were adepts in black magic and bewitchment, and were trained to kill people from a distance with ritual incantations *(karakia).* Different shades of meaning are also given to some of these terms in the various sources, and many other categories of *tohunga* are also described.

In several Māori tribes, women were also trained as *tohungas,* and a female *tohunga* of any grade was generally known as a *tohunga-ruahine,* a *ruahine* being a wise woman, a woman of rank who is past child-bearing age. Her skills were specifically employed in helping women, especially concerning rites associated with divination, coming of age, healing, childbirth, and so on.[2]

Not all students graduated through all three grades. Indeed, having passed through the lower schools, it was only rare students who were invited to take initiation into the *whare wānanga* (school of enlightenment) – to be taught

the sacred knowledge of *Io,* the supreme Being. These teachings were on a higher plane of thought. The *whare wānanga* brought the students to the seventh degree, pertaining to *te kete uruuru matua:*

> After rigorous tests and after completion of the grades of the *whare mauri* was the *akoako* admitted into the *whare wānanga.* By now, the *akoako* (student) was a fledgling *tohunga.* He knew how to cure any illness,... split stones with his *karakia* (incantation), foretell the future, and call upon the aid of an *atua* at sea and in war. As yet he was probably not old enough to be recognized as a *tohunga* because it took old age to truly become a *tohunga* of high *mana* (spiritual power). However, in the seventh year of training the student was now ready to learn about *Io,* supreme Being of the Māori.
>
> Not all people learnt of *Io,* and not all people who learnt of *Io* became *tohunga ahurewa.* Persons of noble rank such as chiefs learnt of *Io* and partook in the *Io* religion, but were not always *tohunga ahurewa.* Instead, the *tohunga ahurewa* conducted their religion. His role was to be a serviceman of the *Io* religion for others and to run the *whare wānanga* for his students. The *tohunga ahurewa* was a minister of the innermost and highest secrets of all knowledge preserved by the Māori. This *tohunga* was of high faith and was dedicated to humanity, and being in oneness with the supreme Being.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK p.272*

Trained in focus, concentration, intent and skill in the recitation of *karakia,* the more spiritually advanced *tohunga* were experts in working with esoteric powers and themselves became imbued with *mana* (power), often becoming *tapu* (sacred, restricted, untouchable). Such *tohungas* lived solitary lives of purity, devotion, and service. Today, *tohunga* of such high character are rare and remain withdrawn from society:

> As a rule, a *tohunga* was treated with great consideration, not so much from love of himself or office, as from a very natural dread of his power and supernatural connections; for such a man had – ever at his command – gods, *taniwhas* (monsters) and other familiar spirits, many of whom, when in the flesh, had been his own ancestors and had, by virtue of the *karakias* of the *tohunga,* a limited jurisdiction over the affairs of man, and would when called upon avenge any slight offered to their master; for such was the position occupied by a *tohunga* that he did not supplicate assistance, he demanded it, and so long as his *mana* lasted he received it. But if, by any sin of omission or commission, he lost his *mana,* his own gods would be among the first to destroy him....

> Among the many duties that devolved upon a *tohunga* was the imposition of the *tapu,* and its removal from any person or thing whensoever the interests of the tribe demanded this exercise of his powers. He was also required to offer up the invocations to compel those sea gods and *taniwha* (sea monsters) – who might have power over the sea and its inhabitants – to behave quietly, and ensure the safe return of fishermen. . . .
>
> A respectable *tohunga,* that is a man of any standing in his profession, would, as a rule, disdain to use his powers against any ordinary man who might affront him, unless, indeed, the insult was so gross that it could not be passed over, in which case discipline had to be maintained. Between rival *tohungas,* there was neither love, forbearance, nor generosity; bitter enmity was the rule, and they did not hesitate to destroy one another whenever opportunity offered, thus verifying the truth of the old adage, that two of a trade can never agree.
>
> *Walter Gudgeon, Tohunga Maori, TMG pp.66–67, 69*

The duties of a *tohunga* were many, and were often of a social or community nature:

> Numerous indeed were the duties of a *tohunga.* He it was who pronounced the *toko* or divorce over such married people who became tired of one another's society, and, by another potent charm, brought together errant wives or husbands. By the magic spell of the *tataiwhetu,* he could and frequently did drive away or dissipate the frost that threatened the existence of the *taro* and *kumara* (species of sweet potato) plantations of the tribe. He would, moreover, by means of those *karakias* which had been handed down to him from his ancestors, recall the vital spark to the inanimate body, and in this way arrest the flight of the spirit to *Hadēs,* by way of the gates of night *(tatau o te po).*
>
> *Walter Gudgeon, Tohunga Maori, TMG pp.90–91*

Only a few were adept in the higher and more spiritual knowledge:

> The inferior orders of *tohunga,* or priestly experts, were not acquainted with the higher teachings, hence they could impart to others merely the common or more popular versions of cosmogonic and other myths.
>
> *Elsdon Best, Maori Religion and Mythology, MRM1 p.67*

With the coming of British settlers to New Zealand and the brutality of Western firearms and legal systems, the training and work of the *tohunga* was eventually outlawed, although not entirely extinguished. Settlers traded

firearms with the local Māori, and there were instances of these being turned against the all-powerful *tohunga* in self-defence.

Knowledge of *Io,* the supreme Being, had always been highly privileged and restricted to those of high birth. Yet Christian missionaries brought their own news of the supreme Being and were able to show possible parallels between traditional Māori and Old Testament mythologies. Many of the lay Māori, who had been denied spiritual lives, were found to be thirsty for spiritual growth, and Māori traditions became fused with Christianity, with beliefs in the Māori *atua* (gods) still prevailing, yet in a diluted form. Many contemporary *tohunga* adopted the Christian mysteries and rituals, trading their *maro* or traditional loincloth for a cassock. Yet, in more recent times, with a newfound tolerance for all religions in New Zealand, the ways of the old *tohunga* are enjoying a revival.

See also: **atua** (▸1), **kahuna**, **karakia** (▸3), **mana (Māori)** (7.3), **tapu** (▸3), **tohunga ahurewa**.

1. See Samuel Timoti Robinson, *Tohunga, TRAK* pp.83–95.
2. Samuel Timoti Robinson, *Tohunga, TRAK* pp.90–91.

tohunga ahurewa, **tohunga tūāhu** (Mo) *Lit.* expert *(tohunga)* of the sacred place *(ahurewa, tūāhu);* priest of the shrine or high altar; a *tohunga* who teaches and performs ceremonies, rites and rituals of the highest significance pertaining to *Io,* the supreme Being.

The *tohunga ahurewa* or *tohunga tūāhu* derive their knowledge, wisdom and expertise from an ancient line of esoteric teachings. They worship and serve *Io-Matua-Kore – Io* the supreme Being, the Parentless One, He who is self-existent, born of none:

> From Hawaii to Tahiti, Tonga, Samoa, Easter Island and New Zealand, the Polynesians generally worshipped the same gods and observed a similar religion. The priests of Hawaii were called *kahuna* while their Tahitian name was *tāhuna.* In Tonga they are called *tahunga.* Most Māori refer to them as *tohunga,* although Tūhoe call them *tohuna,* while in the South Island we call them *tohuka* as they are also called in the Marquesas Islands. The priests of ancient Polynesia all derive from an ancient line of esoteric teaching.
>
> It was these priests, scattered all over Polynesia, who for hundreds of years voyaged to a sacred temple near Tahiti to meet annually and unite in the old religion. Recent information shows that Māori travelled to Ra'iatea, one of the Society Islands, 200 kilometres west of Tahiti, where all Polynesians met to perform sacred ceremonies.

> Here, priests from Hawaii to New Zealand gathered together and conversed in a sacred 'Polynesian high tongue', or ancient common Polynesian language, in which they could all understand one another. On the island of Ra'iatea also stands the sacred temple *Taputapu-ātea* meaning 'most sacred of sacred spaces'. It was here that all priests maintained the old religion, worshipping *Io* the supreme Being, and performed the most sacred rites of the Māori. The meeting of priests and chiefs, however, came to an end some six hundred years ago when a Māori priest was murdered at the temple. . . .
>
> On every island, *kāhuna, tāhuna* and *tohunga* did their best to maintain the *whare wānanga* or school of priestly knowledge. New priests were taught as closely to the original tradition as possible, but in time the *whare wānanga* has also declined.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK pp.77–78*

The *tohunga ahurewa* is the highest and most sacred *(tapu)* of all the Māori *tohunga.* The most proficient among them has gained intimate knowledge of the sacred mysteries of *Io,* the hidden truths of creation, and is trained in healing, in the performance of rituals, in the practice of divination *(niu),* and in the power to work miracles *(hoa).* They were seers *(matakite)* and channels for the *atua* (ancestral deities), credited with great influence with the unseen:

> All Māori prophets are *tohunga ahurewa.* They are miracle workers. The work of the *tohunga ahurewa* is not like any of the lower grades found in the *whare mauri* or *whare kura* (schools of learning). All their work involves self-sacrifice. The priest surrenders his being in working for the *mana* (spiritual power) of Māori. He gives his life, all of his energy and all of his time and effort in upholding the *mana tāngata* (power inherent in a person), the *mana whenua* (power of the land), and the *mana atua* (supernatural powers). He works and empowers the people, the land, and the divinities. He is a minister of truth and good.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK p.273*

In traditional Māori culture, all knowledge of *Io* was highly secret and carefully guarded, available only to the privileged few under the guidance of the *tohunga ahurewa.* This knowledge was acquired through ascent into the inner heavens and experience of the true Self, and by access to *te kete uruuru matua* (the basket of the inner Parent) in the realm of enlightenment and bliss. It was understood in the *hamano* or highest soul.

The sacred *tohunga* were dedicated to the service of humanity, particularly of their own tribe, and to "being in onenes-s with the supreme Being".

They educated disciples, guided, healed and served people and were keepers of the "innermost and highest secrets of all sacred knowledge preserved by the Māori". Samuel Timoti Robinson describes some facets of the *Io* tradition of the Kāi Tahu, a South Island Māori tribe. The highest secrets, however, remain undisclosed:

> The *tohunga ahurewa* was a minister of the innermost and highest secrets of all knowledge preserved by Māori. This *tohunga* was of high faith and was dedicated to humanity and being in oneness with the supreme Being. . . .
>
> The work of the *tohunga ahurewa* is very involved. In it are works of mysticism, ascending the heavens, purifications, hymns, baptism ceremonies, divination, healing rites, public services, and saying *karakia* (recitals, chants) over the ill. At its deepest level are years spent in isolation. The *tohunga ahurewa* is a miracle worker.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK pp.272–73*

Tohunga education is founded upon the myth of the three sacred baskets *(kete)* of knowledge, each containing a different kind of knowledge, brought from *Io* to mankind by the god *Tāne.* All *tohunga* began with the same training, but each advanced to a different level of knowledge, understanding, and proficiency. Only a select few were personally invited to enter into the *whare wānanga* (school of sacred learning), the Māori school of enlightenment. Here they received initiation into the sacred knowledge of *Io.* His name was so sacred that it could only be uttered aloud in the open, away from people and dwellings. He was known as *Io-Matua, Io*-the-Parent. The higher degree of *tohunga* taught that *Io,* the supreme Being, was parentless; that *Io* spoke the holy Word at each stage of the manifestation and unfolding of the entire creation; and that everything is derived through the power and the will of *Io.*[1]

Various degrees of training[2] led the student *(akoako)* to the highest level of the *tohunga,* passing through the intermediary stages of the *whare kura* (school of learning) and *whare mauri* (school of the life principle) before reaching the *whare wānanga.* Much of the ancient knowledge has been lost, but Samuel Timoti Robinson describes the seven such stages known to the Kahungunu tribe. These were taught in seven courses, each course lasting one year. *Whare wānanga* was also used as a general name for the entire course.

Poutahi (first grade) was the only grade *(pou)* within the foundational *whare kura.* Here, the *akoako* learnt the ancestral lineages, tribal history and boundaries, and so on. For the second grade *(pourua),* the *akoako* was admitted to the *whare mauri,* where he learnt some basic incantations *(karakia),* Māori myths, and knowledge of the deities and stars. The third to sixth degrees also belonged to the *whare mauri.* In the third grade *(poutoru),*

> an *akoako* (student) learnt about the setting free and binding of spiritual powers. A graduate of this grade became a *tohunga tūāhu,* literally meaning 'master of the shrine'. The goal of this student was dedication to oneness and understanding of the spiritual powers.... His primary purpose was dealing with *atua* (ancestral gods).
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK p.89*

The fourth degree *(pouwhā)* was focused on openness, meditation, and training to become a *waka* or medium for the gods and to become proficient in *matakite* (prophecy). A *tohunga-matakite* acted as adviser to the chief *(ariki),* using his skills as a diviner when significant decision-making was required.

In the fifth grade *(pourima),* the *akoako* learned various cleansing rituals and the medicinal use of plants. A *pourima* graduate was a qualified *tohunga-rongoā* (master of medicine).

In the sixth grade *(pouono),* the *akoako* was trained in the witchcraft of warfare, graduating as a *tohunga-ruānuku,* also called a *tohunga-mākutu* (master of bewitchments). In times of conflict, their services were provided to the *ariki,* who instructed the *tohunga-ruānuku* to consecrate warriors to use destructive curses, but only for the welfare of the tribe. At other times, the skills of the *tohunga-ruānuku* were used in law enforcement.

At the secret and little-known seventh level of *pouwhitu,* the *akoako* learnt the hidden truths of the creation and of *Io,* the invisible creator, and his goal was spiritual union. He was trained in the power to work miracles *(hoa),* even to revive people from death:

> The *pouwhitu* was educated in the highest prize of Māori, the knowledge of *Io* the supreme Being and the hidden truths of creation. In this order, the student was trained in *hoa,* the power to work miracles. All of the teachings in this order were projected on a higher plane of thought. The goal of the *pouwhitu* was achievement of spiritual oneness and service to the people. On graduation, a student became a *tohunga ahurewa,* meaning 'master of the high altar'. This *tohunga* was the most multitalented, and excelled in all areas including navigation, healing, public ceremonies, divination, and prayers.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK p.90*

After passing through all the levels of training and the seventh degree *(pouwhitu)* in the *whare wānanga* (school of esoteric learning), it still took a great many years to become a *tohunga* of high *mana,* of spiritual fire and power. Being a person of great inner power, the *tohunga ahurewa* was highly *tapu* (sacred, restricted). If someone so much as touched such a *tohunga* or anything with which a *tohunga* had come into physical contact, it could result in that person's demise. *Tohunga ahurewa* themselves did not eat or touch

cooked food, nor water that had been boiled in pots because these substances were considered *noa* – common and un-sacred. As a consequence, they were often fed by an attendant by means of a long stick.

Advanced *tohunga ahurewa* could become so imbued with *tapu* and *mana* that anyone approaching them or touching them, and who was unable to withstand their power, was at risk:

> The *tohunga* was by far the most important man in a Māori tribe, and this was especially the case when it happened that the same man combined exalted rank as a chief with the priestly power and knowledge with which all *tohungas* were gifted. Given this combination of rank and knowledge, such a man would be known as the *ariki* or supreme head of the tribe. An *ariki* of this class would – to speak irreverently – be *tapu* an inch deep, and would moreover communicate his personal sacredness to everything he touched; so that if anyone were so ill-advised or so ignorant as to give him water in a cup or food in a plate, he would out of kindness to the incautious owner pound those utensils to dust in order that no harm might come to those who, being less sacred than himself, might use the same in ignorance of the power of his *tapu.* Personal *tapu* might never be lightly treated or ignored, for common men have been known to die suddenly after using a pipe dropped by a *tapu* chief, or after eating the remains of food, . . . partly eaten by such a man.
>
> *Walter Gudgeon, Tohunhga Māori, TMG p.63*

The life of such a *tohunga* was different to that of others:

> The *tohunga* was a *tapu* or sacred man. He kept himself strictly away from common things (food preparation, eating). As a *tohunga,* he was required to keep himself clean and live a pure life of *karakia* or prayers. A *tohunga* would not allow hot water to come into contact with any part of the body. He washed in cold water. This was because hot water was generally a product of the cooking fire, and it was therefore contaminated. The living arrangements of a *tohunga* were strictly separate from food preparation and eating, as were all his *tohunga* activities.
>
> It was the duty of a *tohunga* to ensure his knowledge was imparted to another, so that should he die his knowledge would remain. However, many of the last great *tohunga* took their knowledge to the grave with them. They felt that the younger generation would not be wise in using such powers. If, however, a dying *tohunga* had not completely imparted his knowledge to his student, then a ritual was performed to ensure its continuation. The student was required to sit with his teacher and inhale his last breath. The student then became like a *matakite* (seer), and learned the knowledge through dreams. . . .

> Another ritual is called the *ngau taringa.* In this ceremony, the student who will succeed his teacher 'bites' the ear of the elder. The spirit of the *tohunga* then becomes the guardian and guide to the student and all his knowledge will be imparted to him.
>
> *Samuel Timoti Robinson, Tohunga, TRAK pp.92, 94*

In the *ngau taringa* ritual, no actual biting occurred, only light contact. In some tribes, contact was made by mouth to the top of the head, in others with closed teeth against the forehead of the dying *tohunga,* at the same time taking a short inward breath.

To the old Māori, the *tohunga* was the sole medium of communication with the ancestral gods *(atua);* he was the *karakia* master, and the value of the service to his tribe could not be overestimated.

See also: **initiation (Māori)** (7.4), **tapu** (▸4), **tohunga**.

1. Samuel Timoti Robinson, *Tohunga, TRAK* pp.20–25.
2. See Samuel Timoti Robinson, *Tohunga, TRAK* pp.88–91.

tóng (C) *Lit.* ignorant. See **yú**.

trader(s) See **merchant(s)**.

Trairāshika (S), **Terāsiya** (Pk) *Lit.* consisting of *(rāshika)* three *(tri);* a class or sect of religious mendicants who believed that everything has a triple nature; the *Ājīvikas,* the *Nirgranthas* (Jains), and other similar ascetic brotherhoods of ancient India, who were known collectively as *vrātyas* (those who take vows).

According to a commentary on a Jain text, the *Nandī Sūtra,* the *Trairāshikas* believed in a triple aspect to all things.[1] Referring to this commentary, a modern scholar writes:

> The *Ājīvika* heretics founded by Goshāla are likewise called *Trairāshikas,* since they declare everything to be of triple character, *viz.* living, not living, and both living and not living; world, not world, and both world and not world; real, unreal, and both real and unreal. With regard to principles *(naya),* they postulate that something may be of the nature of substance, of quality, or of both. Thus, since they maintain three heaps (*rāshi, i.e.* categories), they are called *Trairāshikas.*
>
> *A.L. Basham, History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas; cf. HDAV p.274*

The *Nandī Sūtra* claims that *Trairāshika* was another name for the *Ājīvikas,* who are regarded as the followers of Makkhali Goshāla. Goshāla was a companion and disciple of Mahāvīra, the last of the twenty-four Jain *Tīrthankaras.* According to Jain tradition, Goshāla parted company with Mahāvīra after a falling out, and formed a breakaway movement. But the history is shrouded in uncertainty and is further obscured by the claims of Jain tradition. Some scholars are of the opinion that the *Ājīvikas* were already in existence at the time of Goshāla and Mahāvīra.

According to another Jain text, the *Kalpa Sūtra,* the *Terāsiya* sect was founded as a breakaway movement by Chalua Rohagutta, a disciple of a certain Mahāgiri, more than two centuries after the death of Mahāvīra.[2] But whatever the real history may have been, the beliefs and practices of the *Trairāshikas* appear to have been of an ascetic nature, bearing a close resemblance to those of the Jains.

See also: **Ājīvika**.

1. Commentary on the *Nandī Sūtra, fol.*113, in *VSP2* p.685; *cf.* commentary on *Samavāyānga, fol.*129; see *HDAV* p.274 (n.5).
2. See A.K. Roy, *A History of the Jains, HJAR.*

traveller See **progressive**.

treasurer Mystically, an epithet of the masters as custodians and distributors of the spiritual treasure within. Together with 'treasure' and 'treasury', the term appears in a variety of contexts in Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Mandaean, and other gnostic literature, as well as that of Syrian Christianity, especially in the works of Ephraim Syrus. The treasurer can represent either God, the divine Word, the saviour, or the immortal soul. In Syrian Christianity and Mandaeism, a treasurer is also a high level priest.[1]

One of the better-known appearances of the metaphor is in the allegorical gnostic poem, the *Robe of Glory.* In the description of the soul's return to God, the soul, having reached a high level, is sent the "robe" of glory, the garment of light, the true vestment of the soul. The ones who bring the "robe" from the eternal realm are two "treasurers" – these most probably representing the saviour and the divine Word that is his essential life and existence:

> And my bright robe which I had stripped off,
> and the toga in which it was wrapped,
> from the heights of Hyrcania,
> my parents sent thither,

by the hand of their treasurers,
who in their faithfulness could be trusted with it.
Robe of Glory 72–74, Acts of Thomas IX, in PSW p.192

Soon, however, the soul realizes that the two treasurers are actually one:

And the treasurers also,
who brought it to me, I saw in like manner,
that they were two, yet of one likeness.
Robe of Glory 79–80, Acts of Thomas IX, in PSW p.193

The 'robe' itself then points out that the two treasurers have brought the soul into the presence of God so that it may know itself as it really is:

Thou art This, and it is for my sake
that the treasurers have raised you,
to usher you into the presence of my Father.
Robe of Glory 91, Acts of Thomas IX, in PSW p.193

Echoes of the same allegory are found in both Manichaean and Mandaean literature, as in:

The treasurer of the world of light will bless you,
and the pure mountain – the radiance of which shines forth
in flaming light – will bless you.
Mandaean Prayer Book 379; cf. CPM p.298

See also: **treasure** (▸4).

1. Geo Widengren, in *GVM* pp.84–86.

tulku (T) *Lit.* body *(sku)* of manifestation *(sprul);* a phonetic rendering of the Tibetan transliteration *sprul sku;* emanation body, manifestation body; the recognized reincarnation of a Tibetan *lama* who is found, generally in childhood, and is raised to inherit the position of his predecessor; a high-ranking *lama* who, out of compassion for the struggling sentient beings of *saṃsāra* (cycle of birth and death, worldly existence) is believed to reincarnate immediately after death, working continuously for the spiritual liberation of all beings; includes high-ranking *lamas* such as the *Dalai* (Ocean) *Lama,* the *Panchen* (great scholar) *Lama,* and the *Karmapa.*[1]

The concept of the *tulku* is generally regarded as a development of the Buddhist notion of the *trikāya* (three bodies) of the Buddha. The Buddha in

his *dharma* body (S. *dharmakāya*) was essentially eternal and enlightened, but he manifested or emanated himself in a subtle body (S. *sambhoga-kāya*) and a material body (S. *nirmāṇa-kāya,* body of manifestation), so that beings lost in *saṃsāra* could be aware of him and benefit from his teachings. The *nirmāṇa-kāya* was the materially manifested body through which the Buddha was able to communicate with sentient beings at the material level. It could be seen by every being in this world, but the *sambhoga-kāya* was visible only to *bodhisattvas. Tulku* is also used to translate *nirmāṇa-kāya.*

Contrary to other human beings, who take birth entirely according to the dictates of their *karma,* a *tulku* chooses the circumstances of his or her new birth and, at the time of death, is able to indicate where it will be. A *tulku* is generally reincarnated as a human being of the same gender as his or her previous birth, although in practice most *tulkus* are men. The tradition is an aspect of Tibetan *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, whose followers take the *bodhisattva* vow not to enter into full *nirvāṇa* until all sentient beings ("even the grass") have been liberated. Since Buddhism does not believe in the existence of a soul, reincarnation is understood as the emanation of the 'mindstream' of the predecessor.

At the present time, over 2,000 *tulkus* are known, although the number before the mid-twentieth-century Chinese invasion was more than twice that number. A *tulku* is believed to reincarnate successively in a particular lineage. Thus, the present and fourteenth *Dalai Lama* is believed to have successively reincarnated as the last thirteen *Dalai Lamas,* who are themselves symbolically regarded as incarnations of Avalokiteshvara (T. Chenrezig), the celestial *bodhisattva* of compassion. Likewise, the *Panchen Lama* is understood to be an incarnation, through all his predecessors, of the Buddha divinity Amitābha ('Buddha of Infinite Light'). A *tulku* lineage is thus different from that of a lineage of spiritual teachers or masters, who give the same teachings, passing on the reins to a successor at the time of their death.

The tradition of the *tulku* as the emanation or reincarnation of a *lama* evolved during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. The notion includes the belief that a reincarnating *tulku* can inherit the estate of their former incarnation, a practice that led to the creation of huge estates. The first *tulku* to be recognized as such was Karma Pakshi (1204–1283), believed to have been a reincarnation of the first *Karmapa,* head of the *Karma Kagyū* school of Tibetan Buddhism. From there, the practice was adopted by other schools of Tibetan Buddhism. The *Karmapa* is presently said to be in his seventeenth reincarnation.

The lineage of *Dalai Lamas* is deemed to have begun with Gendün Drub (1391–1474). However, the title was not applied to the lineage until the time of his third reincarnation Sönam Gyatso, who was dubbed the *Dalai Lama* when he was an adult, after which the title was applied retrospectively to his three predecessors. The political power of the lineage was established by Lobsang Gyatso, the fifth *Dalai Lama.* Most *tulkus* of the past have been

Tibetans, although some have been found among neighbouring races, such as the Mongols. In modern times, with the spread of Tibetan Buddhism, *tulkus* have been found throughout the world, a few among Westerners.

As the death of a *tulku* draws near, he or she may give a variety of hints or signs enabling their next incarnation to be found. These may include writings, a specific letter or a song, which provide details concerning their future parents, the location of their dwelling, and so forth. The *Karmapa,* in particular, leaves a letter describing how his reincarnation may be identified. In fact, the *Karmapas* are themselves called upon to identify the location of the *tulkus* of other lineages. In 2002, the present-day *Karmapa,* Ogyen Trinley Dorje, spoke about this process:

> When recognizing *tulkus,* my mind feels rather normal, not overly sad or overly happy. In that state, the recognitions come. It's not like being possessed by a deity. I do not rely on divinations, calculations, or deities. Mainly, you have to look directly at your own mind – the natural, uncontrived mind – and thereby a great certainty can arise.
>
> Usually, the recognitions come through with the names of the parents and the name of the year in which the child was born, and so forth. For all the *tulkus* I have recognized, the information has come through in this way. Sometimes people send letters that request the recognition of a child as a reincarnation, and describe special signs and events. For the most part, these indications mean that this child has a good accumulation of merit, which is the source of the positive signs. One can't rule out that the child could be a *tulku,* but one cannot identify them definitely as a *tulku* either. Therefore I don't particularly make decisions based on these requests.
>
> The recognition of Jamgön Rinpoche was a special occasion, since it was the only one to appear while I was in meditation. Previously, people from his administration made many requests asking me to find his incarnation, and I kept those in mind. Then one day when I was resting in meditation, I remembered Jamgön Rinpoche, and at that time, I saw it; the recognition came into my mind.
>
> *Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, Conversation with Michele Martin, Music in the Sky, MSGK p.54*

The search for the reincarnated *tulku* begins soon after the passing of the *lama,* and it is the monastery's responsibility to send out a search party of monks to try and find him. In the absence of any specific details, these monks may resort to a *lama-tulku* astrologer *(tsispa)* for instructions. Prophecies spanning several generations may also play a part. The checking of the child generally involves various tests, including the recognition of acquaintances or possessions of their former life, or the answering of questions, the answers to which

would only be known to the former life. The child may be presented with a selection of objects, from which he or she must choose those that belonged to them in their previous life. After 'discovery', the child, even at a very early age, may be taken from home and raised in the respective monastery, or may remain with his or her parents until old enough to live at the monastery. Sometimes, the child may alternate family life with life at the monastery.

The thoroughness of this search procedure can vary according to the importance of the *tulku.* The search for a *tulku* may be only perfunctory, motivated by political or social considerations, and "there are cases where the genuineness of the selection is questionable."[2] For important *tulkus,* such as the *Dalai Lama* and the *Panchen Lama,* the search is rigorous and carefully undertaken. Even then, the process is fraught with potential error and political manipulation. Modern Tibetan historian Samten Gyaltsen Karmay relates that the fifth *Dalai Lama* Lobsang Gyatso described the manoeuvrings of his own religious order in his autobiography. Of his own 'discovery', he writes:

> The official *Tsawa Kachu* of the Ganden Palace showed me statues and rosaries (that belonged to the fourth *Dalai Lama* and other *lamas*), but I was unable to distinguish between them! When he left the room, I heard him tell the people outside that I had successfully passed the tests. Later, when he became my tutor, he would often admonish me and say: "You must work hard, since you were unable to recognize the objects!"
>
> *Lobsang Gyatso, in "The Great Fifth," in IIAS39 p.12*

The potential for error in the system is acknowledged by the *lamas* themselves. "When a group of Jewish delegates met with some aged monks of the *Dalai Lama'*s tradition, a certain Dr Marc Lieberman asked, 'What happens when a *tulku* turns out to be a dud?', even the most ceremonious of the abbots laughed."[3]

See also: **Dalai Lama**, **nirmāṇa-kāya** (7.2).

1. Much material in this entry derived from "Tulku," *Wikipedia,* ret. February 2012.
2. Patrul Rinpoche, *Words of My Perfect Teacher, WMPT* p.353.
3. Rodger Kamenetz, *The Jew in the Lotus, JLPR* p.120.

ubhato-bhāga-vimutta (Pa) *Lit.* liberated *(vimutta)* in both *(ubhato)* parts *(bhāga);* liberated in both ways; one who has attained complete mastery of the eight liberations *(aṭṭha-vimokkhas)* – also called the eight *jhānas* (states of meditative absorption), has acquired supernatural wisdom *(abhiññā),* has

destroyed all impurities *(āsavas),* and enjoys liberation through both mind *(ceto-vimutti)* and wisdom or insight *(paññā-vimutti)*[1] – through both faith and discriminatory intelligence; one of a sevenfold classification of noble disciples (S. *ārya-pudgala,* Pa. *ariya-puggala*). See **dharmānusārin**.

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* 15, *Mahānidāna Sutta, PTSD2* pp.70–71, *TBLD* pp.229–30.

udāsin (S), **udāsī** (H/Pu) *Lit.* detached, indifferent; an indifferent and detached person; one who is indifferent to and detached from the world; also, one who is sorrowful or lonesome; from *udās* (detached, indifferent, sorrowful, lonesome); a renunciate, a hermit, an ascetic, a *sādhu;* also, a member of a Sikh school who wears the saffron robes of a *sannyāsī* (renunciate), and considers himself the follower of Bābā Shrī Chand, the elder son of Guru Nānak. They call themselves *udāsīs* because they say that they long for God, and are lonesome and indifferent to the world in separation from Him.

Udāsī is also the name given to the long teaching tours undertaken by Guru Nānak during the years 1500–1520, so called because it is related that at these times he dressed like a pilgrim or a *sādhu,* wearing the garb of local *sādhus* or pilgrims. On his journey to Mecca, it is said that he "disguised himself in the blue dress of a Muhammadan pilgrim, took a *faqīr*'s staff in his hand and a collection of his hymns under his arm. He also carried with him, in the style of a Mussalman devotee, a cup for his ablutions and a carpet whereon to pray."[1]

In the time of Guru Nānak, *udāsī* referred to a yogi or renunciate. In his verses, the *guru* recalls a meeting with *siddhas* or yogis. The *siddhas* ask him:

> Why have you left your house,
> and become a wandering *udāsī?*
> Why have you adopted these religious robes?
> What merchandise do you trade?
> How will you carry others across with you?
> *Guru Nānak, Ādi Granth 939, AGK*

And the *guru* responds to each question:

> I became a wandering *udāsī,*
> searching for the *gurmukhs* (saints).
> I have adopted these robes
> seeking the blessed *darshan* of the Lord.
> I trade in the merchandise of Truth.
> O Nānak, as a *gurmukh,* I carry others across.
> *Guru Nānak, Ādi Granth 939, AGK*

See also: **udāsīnya** (▸4).

1. M.A. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion, SR1* p.174.

uddhaṃ-sota akaniṭṭha-gāmī (Pa) *Lit.* one who attains enlightenment *(parinibbāyī)* by going *(gāmī)* upstream *(uddhaṃ-sota)* to the highest gods *(akaniṭṭha);* one of the five kinds of *anāgāmīs* (non-returners). See **anāgāmin**.

ūlū al-albāb (A) *Lit.* men *(ūlū)* of hearts *(albāb), albāb* being the plural of *lubb* (kernel, heart, quintessence); people of the quintessence, men of understanding; possessors of understanding, those that are wise; those endowed with understanding hearts. The expression appears at a number of places in the *Qur'ān,*[1] in two main contexts. Sometimes the meaning is general, implying wise people who reflect upon things:

> He grants wisdom *(ḥikmah)* to whom He pleases;
> And he to whom wisdom *(ḥikmah)* is granted
> receives indeed a benefit overflowing;
> Yet none grasp the message,
> but people of understanding *(ūlū albāb).*
>
> *Qur'ān 2:269; cf. AYA*

And:

> Do you not see how God sends down rain from the sky,
> which seeps into the earth and appears as springs?
> And by this means He causes plants of various colours to grow;
> Then they wither, and turn yellow,
> and then He makes them dry up, and crumble away.
> Truly, in this there is a reminder
> for people of understanding *(ūlū albāb).*
>
> *Qur'ān 39:21; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

> We gave Moses Our guidance,
> and We caused the Children of Israel to inherit the Book –
> as a guide and reminder to people of understanding *(ūlū albāb).*
>
> *Qur'ān 40:53–54; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

In other instances, the "people of understanding" are those who believe specifically in the message of Muḥammad or accept the contents of the "Book" – the *Qur'ān:*

> Fear God, O people of understanding *(ūlū albāb)* – you who believe!
> For God has indeed sent down a reminder to you –
> a messenger who declares to you the revelations of God
> in plain language.
>
> *Qur'ān 65:10–11; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

> We have revealed this Book to you, full of blessings,
> that they may ponder its revelations,
> and that people of understanding *(ūlū albāb)* may reflect.
>
> *Qur'ān 38:29; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

> Those who listen to the word, and follow what is best in it:
> These are they whom God has guided:
> such are people of understanding *(ūlū al-albāb).*
>
> *Qur'ān 39:18; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

In Rūmī's vocabulary, the *ūlū al-albāb* are the mystically inclined or the perfect saints themselves. True seekers, he says, have no time for intellectual "reason *(ʿaql)*". The *ʿaql* they seek is the *ʿAql-i rabbānī,* the divine Wisdom or creative power:

> Whoever takes hold of a branch, the branch breaks and he falls down. Whoever takes hold of the tree, all its branches are his. How is it that people of understanding *(ūlū al-albāb)* do not want the reason *(ʿaql)* that everyone has.… A certain philosopher declares: "What I say is based on reason *(maʿqūl).*" But he has no scent of this divine Wisdom *(ʿAql-i rabbānī).*
>
> *Rūmī, in Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 4:68, MASA2 pp.666–67; cf. FKG pp.460–61*

Elsewhere, Rūmī also describes Muḥammad as one of the *ūlū al-albāb.*[2]

See also: **lubb** (2.2).

1. See also *Qur'ān* 2:179, 3:190, 14:52.
2. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:322; *cf. MJR2* p.21.

ūlū al-ʿazm (A/P) (sg. *źu al-ʿazm*) *Lit.* people *(ūlū)* of resolve *(ʿazm),* people of firm intention; those of inflexible purpose, those with determination and energy; possessors of constancy, men with a mission. *ʿAzm* means resolve, determination, firm will, firm intention, decision, constancy, resolution, energy. A term originating in the *Qur'ān* to describe 'those who are sent' with a divine purpose, the messengers of God:

> Therefore patiently persevere, as did those of inflexible purpose *(ūlū al-ʿazm),* the messengers *(rusul);* and be in no haste about them (the unbelievers).
>
> *Qur'ān 46:35; cf. AYA*

The *ūlū al-ʿazm* are said by Quranic commentators to include Noah, Abraham, David, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad.[1]

See also: **ʿazm** (▸4), **mursal**.

1. See "ulu 'l-ʿazm," *Dictionary of Islam, DOI* p.650.

ūlū al-ʿilm (A) *Lit.* men *(ūlū)* of knowledge *(ʿilm);* those endowed with knowledge, possessors of knowledge, men of learning; scholars, wise men, sages; also, saints, holy men. Since knowledge can be either intellectual or mystical, *ūlū al-ʿilm* can refer either to scholars, the mystically inclined, or to the mystics themselves, depending on the context. The expression appears in the *Qur'ān,*[1] where it describes the believers as opposed to the unbelievers:

> There is no god but He:
> That is the witness of God, His angels,
> and of those endowed with knowledge *(ūlū al-ʿilm).*
> He is the executor of justice,
> the one God, the Mighty, the Wise.
>
> *Qur'ān 3:18; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

On the Day of Judgment, when the unbelievers realize their folly:

> Those endowed with knowledge *(ūlū al-ʿilm)* will say:
> "This day, indeed, will the unbelievers
> be smitten with shame and misery."
>
> *Qur'ān 16:27; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

See also: **ahl**, **ummī**.

1. See also *Qur'ān* 28:80, 29:49.

ummī, **ummīy** (A/P) (pl. *ummīyūn, ummīyīn*) *Lit.* illiterate, unlearned, unlettered; an illiterate one, an unlettered one; variously said to be derived from *umm* (mother) or *ummah* (people); an epithet of Muḥammad, used in the *Qur'ān* in a passage where God is instructing Muḥammad:

> "My mercy encompasses all things. Therefore, I have ordained it for those who avoid evil, and give in charity, and who believe in Our signs – those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered *(ummīy)* Prophet *(Nabīy),* whom they will find mentioned in the *Torah* and in the Gospel. . . ."
>
> Say: . . . "So believe in God and His Messenger, the unlettered *(ummīy)* Prophet *(Nabīy),* who believes in God and His Word: follow him so that you may be rightly guided."
>
> *Qur'ān 7:156–58; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

In fact, the *Qur'ān* emphasizes the point that, at the time of his revelation, Muḥammad was unable to read or write:

> Never before this have you (Muḥammad) read a book,
> nor have you ever transcribed one with your right hand:
> For then indeed might the unbelievers have doubted.
> But to men of knowledge *(ūlū al-'ilm),* it is a clear sign,
> and none reject our signs but wrongdoers.
>
> *Qur'ān 29:48–49; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

It is for this reason that Muḥammad is called *al-Nabī al-Ummī* (the Unlettered Prophet). Muslim tradition, however, has not always agreed that the designation *'ummī'* implies that the Prophet was illiterate. It does, after all, seem reasonable that Muḥammad, as a businessman, would have grasped at least the rudiments of reading and writing. It has therefore been suggested that *ummī* refers to the community *(ummah)* of Gentiles, those who were unfamiliar with – who were 'unlettered' in – the scriptures of the Jews. In this sense, Muḥammad was sent to the "unlettered ones *(ummīyūn)*" who had not received a scripture from God:

> He it is who has sent among the unlettered ones *(ummīyīn)* a messenger of their own, to declare unto them His revelations, and to make them grow, and to teach them the scripture and wisdom, though previously they were indeed in manifest error.
>
> *Qur'ān 62:2; cf. MGK*

Over the centuries, the meaning or implication of *ummī* has been a matter of some discussion. Ibn al-'Arabī maintains that to be "unlettered *(ummī)*" is to avoid the use of reason ("reflective consideration") in the understanding of things divine. In fact, he says that only by being "unlettered" can a person become "receptive towards divine revelation", at which point mystical understanding is *ladunnī* (God-given) – another Quranic term:[1]

> For us, being unlettered *(ummī)* does not contradict memorizing the *Qur'ān* or the prophetic *ḥadīths.* In our view, that person is unlettered *(ummī)* who does not employ his reflective consideration and his rational judgment to bring out the meaning and mysteries which the *Qur'ān* embraces. He does not use rational proofs to attain to the knowledge of divine things. . . .
>
> When the heart is safe from reflective consideration, then, according to both the law and reason, it is unlettered *(ummī),* and receptive towards divine revelation in the most perfect manner and without delay. It is provided with God-given *(ladunnī)* knowledge in all things to an extent unknown except to a prophet or one of His friends, whom He has given of it through experience *(dhawq).*
>
> *Ibn al-'Arabī, Meccan Revelations 2:644.17, FMIA4 (4:289) p.409; cf. SPK pp.235–36*

Thinking along similar lines, some Muslim interpreters have suggested that the Prophet was described as spiritually pure or "unlettered" because he was like a blank sheet of paper before the divine Pen *(al-Qalam).*[2]

Rūmī also has a mystical viewpoint. Muḥammad's "partial" human intelligence *('aql-i juzvī),* he says, was illuminated by the Universal Intelligence *('Aql-i Kull),* the creative Intelligence or Wisdom of God at work in the creation:

> The Prophet is not called unlettered *(ummī)* because he was unable to write or learn. He was called unlettered *(ummī)* because his knowledge and wisdom were innate, not acquired. . . .
>
> What was there in the world that he did not know? Indeed, everyone learns from him. What sort of thing could the partial (human) intelligence possess that is not already possessed by the Universal Intelligence *('Aql-i Kull)?* The partial intelligence is unable to produce anything from itself that it has not already experienced.
>
> These (human) creations – engineering feats and buildings that people erect – are not new creations. Having seen something like them, human beings merely make additions. Those who truly produce something new from within themselves are inspired by the Universal Intellect *('Aql-i Kull).* The partial intellect *('aql-i juzvī)* can be taught; it is in need of teaching. But the Universal Intellect *('Aql-i Kull)* is the Teacher; it has no need of anything.
>
> *Rūmī, Fīhi mā Fīhi 38:12–20, KFF p.142; cf. DRA p.151, SOU p.148, in SPL p.36*

In his *Maśnavī,* Rūmī points out that the possession of spiritual wisdom and inner gnosis bears no relationship to worldly learning, or even to scriptural and theological knowledge. This world is "finite", the dimensions of the

spirit are "infinite". To enter those realms, it makes no difference whether a person can read or write:

> He makes visible a hundred worlds like ours,
> when He makes your eye see by His light.
> If the world appears to you vast and bottomless,
> know that to Omnipotence it is not so much as an atom.
> This world, indeed, is the prison of your souls:
> O, go in yonder direction, for there lies your open country.
> This world is finite, and truly *that* is infinite:
> image and form are a barrier to that Reality.
> Myriads of Pharaoh's lances were shattered
> by Moses with a single staff.
> Myriads were the therapeutic arts of Galen:
> before Jesus and his life-giving Breath,
> they were a laughing stock.
> Myriads were the books filled with poetry:
> at the word of an illiterate *(ummī),* they became as nothing.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:523–29; cf. MJR2 p.31*

Speaking of the mystics of the past, ʿInāyat Khān also observes that many prophets have been uneducated:

> There were many prophets of the past who, in a worldly sense, were not educated; among them was the Prophet Muḥammad. By many he was given the name *ummī,* which means 'unlettered', although according to the ideas of that time the Prophet was very well versed in the Arabic language. This shows that worldly education does not make the prophet, though it may help to express in more intelligible form the spiritual message which his heart receives.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK9 p.150*

In a similar vein, Hujwīrī gives the example of Abū al-ʿAbbās Qaṣṣāb:

> He associated with the leading *shaykhs* of Transoxania. He was famed for his lofty spiritual endowments, his true sagacity, and his abundant demonstrations, ascetic practices, and miracles. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Khayyāṭī, the *Imām* of Ṭabaristān, says of him: "It is one of God's bounties that He has made a person who was never taught able to answer our questions about any difficulty concerning the principles of religion and the subtleties of union." Although Abū al-ʿAbbās Qaṣṣāb was illiterate *(ummī),* he discoursed in sublime fashion concerning the science of Sufism and the knowledge of God.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XII:1, KMM pp.202–3; cf. KM p.161*

See also: **al-Qalam** (6.3), **Umm al-Kitāb** (3.1).

1. *Qur'ān* 18:65.
2. *Qur'ān* 68:1, 96:4.

upādhyāya (S/H), **upajjhāya** (Pa), **upādhye** (Pk) *Lit.* instructor, teacher, preceptor; a master of precepts; in Hindu culture, a professional teacher; one who teaches the scriptural and esoteric lore of the *Vedas* or *Vedānta,* but does not initiate disciples into yogic or meditational practices; a sub-teacher, subordinate to an *āchārya;* in the *Manu Smṛiti,* an *upādhyāya* is said to teach students for a fee.[1]

In Buddhism, an *upādhyāya* is one of the two monastic teachers assigned to a novice (masc. *shrāmaṇera,* fem. *shrāmaṇerikā*), the other being an *āchārya* (instructor). The *upādhyāya* teaches monastic discipline and rules, and is responsible for the ordination of monks and nuns, while the *āchārya* teaches the *Dharma.* The *upādhyāya* teaches the external aspects of monastic life, while the *āchārya* teaches the inner and more spiritual side. In Japanese Buddhism, the corresponding term used in *Zen* Buddhism is *oshō,* pronounced *kashō* by the *Tendai* school and *washō* by the *Ritsu* and *Shingon* schools. Nāgārjuna explains the role of the two teachers:

> What are the means by which a *shrāmaṇera* and *shrāmaṇerikā* leave the home life and take on those precepts? The lay follower who comes seeking to leave the home life should request two masters: one *upādhyāya* and one *āchārya.* The *upādhyāya* is comparable to one's father, whereas the *āchārya* is comparable to one's mother. Having set aside one's original parents, one should thus seek out, among the monastics, those capable of serving in those roles.
>
> One next dons the *kashāya* robe while also cutting off the hair and beard. (In bowing down in respect), one should then grasp the feet of the *upādhyāya* with his two hands. Why does one grasp his feet? It is the custom of India that to grasp the feet demonstrates the most superior form of reverential offering. The *āchārya* should then provide instruction in the ten precepts. This is done in accordance with the protocols for receiving those precepts. For the *shrāmaṇerikā,* it is just the same, the difference being that she takes a *bhikshuṇī* (female monk) to serve as her *upādhyāya.*
>
> *Nāgārjuna, On the Six Perfections 2:23.2.6, EGPW*

In the Jain *Shvetāmbara* tradition, an *upādhyāya* is a teacher of monks *(sādhus)* and nuns *(sādhvīs),* subsidiary to the principal *āchārya,* teaching a detailed knowledge of the scriptures *(āgamas)* to junior members of

the order. The position no longer exists in the *Digambara* tradition and, in South India, the title (more usually as *upādhye*) is used for a caste of *Digambara* temple priests. An *upādhyāya* is also one of the five great beings *(pañcha-parameshṭhin)* invoked in the *namaskāra mantra,* an ancient Prakrit sacred formula used as a prayer of homage, obeisance and salutation to the *pañcha-parameshṭhin* who are deemed worthy of worship – Jain *arahantas* (enlightened ones), *siddhas* (perfected, liberated ones), *āchāryas* (mendicant leaders), *upādhyāyas,* and *sādhus* (ordinary mendicants).

See also: **āchārya**, **pañcha-parameshṭhin**.

1. *Manu Smṛiti* 2:141.

upahacca-parinibbāyī (Pa) *Lit.* one who attains enlightenment *(parinibbāyī)* during the cutting short *(upahacca)* of his life; one who attains *nibbāna* after reducing the number of rebirths or when he has almost reached the end of his life; a term with a meaning that is accepted as obscure; one of the five kinds of *anāgāmīs* (non-returners). In Buddhist thinking, a birth can be either in this world or in one of the heavenly realms *(suddhāvāsa).* See **anāgāmin**.

ʿ**uqalāʾ al-majānīn** (A/P) (sg. *ʿaqīl al-majnūn*) *Lit.* rational *(ʿuqalāʾ)* madmen *(majānīn);* wise madmen; they who are both mad and sane; a mystic, particularly an ecstatic. Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ describes the ecstatic *majānīn* as:

> That group which is inwardly adorned though appearing to be defiled are the *majānīn.* Though outwardly they lack all material provisions, they remain inwardly preoccupied with God.… (They are) ecstatic beings *(majānīn),* who exhibit neither perfect knowledge nor sinless actions. From time to time, they can cause a contravention of nature (*i.e.* a miracle), and when they do, that is known as *maʿūnat.*
>
> *Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyāʾ, Morals for the Heart 4:14, 2:23, FFNA pp.229, 117; cf. MHN pp.234–35, 160*

Ibn al-ʿArabī explains that such people are not really mad in the conventional sense, but that all their faculties have become absorbed in the Divine and are "imprisoned with Him":

> By rational madmen *(ʿuqalāʾ al-majānīn),* the *ṣūfīs* mean to say that their madness *(junūn)* is not caused by a corruption of their constitution through some engendered affair, such as food, or hunger, or something else. Their madness derives only from a divine revelation

> to their hearts. The Real comes to them suddenly and takes away their rational faculties. Their rational faculties remain imprisoned with Him, enjoying the bliss of witnessing Him, completely occupied by His presence, purified by His beauty. They are possessors of rational faculties without rational faculties. But they are known outwardly as madmen, *i.e.* as veiled *(mastūr)* from the governance of their rational faculties.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 1:248.12,FMIA1 (1:44) p.376, SPK pp.406–7 (n.15)*

Ibn al-ʿArabī also describes how the *ʿuqulāʾ al-majānīn* become the way they are through an uncontrollable "inrush *(wārid)*" of spiritual inspiration and mystical revelation, which – in their case – overpowers them and remains with them permanently. Permanent intoxication, however, is not the case with all those who experience an "inrush *(wārid)*". Ibn al-ʿArabī divides such people into three categories:

> In this station, people stand in three levels. In the first case, the inrush *(wārid)* is greater than the strength of the soul, so it rules over the soul. He is dominated by the state, and follows its ruling property, so the state turns him this way and that. He has no ability to govern himself as long as he remains in the state. If the state continues to control him until the end of his life, this is called madness *(junūn)* in this path, as in the case of Abū ʿIqāl al-Maghribī.
>
> In the second case, the person's rational faculty is taken away, though the animal understanding (basic sense of survival) remains. He eats, drinks, and goes this way and that without self-governing or deliberation. These are called the rational madmen *(ʿuqalāʾ al-majānīn),* since they take care of their natural livelihood, like other animals. But someone like Abū ʿIqāl was mad and totally taken from himself, so he did not eat and drink, from the time he was taken until he died. This took place over a period of four years, in Mecca. He was mad *(majnūn),* that is totally veiled *(mastūr)* from the world of his own sense perception.
>
> In the third case, the inrush *(wārid)* does not last, so the state disappears. Such a person returns to his fellows with his reason intact. He governs his own affairs, and he understands what he says and what is said to him. He turns this way and that on the basis of deliberation, like any other human being. Such is the prophet and those friends (of God) who are the possessor of states.
>
> *Ibn al-ʿArabī, Meccan Revelations 1:248.27, FMIA1 (1:44) p.386, SPK pp.266–67*

Ibn al-ʿArabī adds that sometimes a person may experience an inrush that is equal to his own spiritual capacity. In such cases, the person's attention is

temporarily withdrawn while the inrush lasts, and then once more focuses upon outward things. An observant person will notice this temporary withdrawal of the attention. But when the inrush is well within the spiritual capacity of the person, then he continues with his outer life as if nothing is happening, and no one notices what is taking place.

See also: **junūn** (▸4), **wārid**.

ushpizin (Am) *Lit.* guests; the seven honoured guests or shepherds – biblical patriarchs and prophets – who, according to a legend recounted in the thirteenth-century *Zohar,*[1] come to visit the *sukkah* (tabernacle or booth) that is constructed in Jewish homes during the festival of *Sukkot* ('Tabernacles'). The *sukkah* is a temporary dwelling made, in modern times, of branches and autumnal fruits, to celebrate the harvest season. In *Leviticus,* the Israelites are commanded to build *sukkot* as a remembrance of their rootless existence during their wanderings in the wilderness after their escape from Egypt.[2] According to legend, the visit of the *ushpizin* is an honour merited by the host's charitable acts and feeding of the poor. They symbolize the divine presence alighting on the *sukkah.*

See also: **seven shepherds**.

1. *Zohar* 3:103b–104a.
2. *Leviticus* 23:42–43.

vāchak(a) (S/H), **bāchak** (Pu) *Lit.* a speaker; from *vach* (speech); a reader; one who expounds scriptures and other books; one who has gleaned knowledge from books; a learned person, an expositor, a sophist, an academic theologian; also, designation, epithet, signifying symbol; speaking, explaining, signifying; in Jainism, a title for learned monks who expound sacred texts.

Since so many people are held in thrall to learned men – whether priests, philosophers, scientists, or other intellectuals – mystics do their best to point out that book knowledge, correctly propounded or otherwise, is only like a recipe in comparison to a cake, a description in comparison to experience. Hence:

> The learned man *(bāchak)* uses his own methods:
> but without practice, the reality is not revealed to him.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 20:27.13, SBP p.169*

And:

The learned *(bāchak)* call themselves brave:
they glorify themselves without ever seeing the battlefield.
Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 24:2.3, SBP p.207

See also: **vāchaka jñānī**.

vāchaka jñānī (S), **vāchak gyānī** (H), **bāchak gyānī** (Pu) *Lit.* one who has verbal *(vāchaka)* knowledge *(jñāna);* an academic theologian, a sophist, a philosopher, a scholar, an intellectual; a person possessing only book, intellectual or theoretical knowledge of mystical experience, without the mystical experience itself.

The entire creation is put together on the principle of reflection, illusion and concealment, and intellectual knowledge is only a reflection of real mystic knowledge or gnosis. The reflective process is so cleverly arranged that the intellectual mind can be quite unaware that it has only grasped a recipe and not the real thing, even if the books being studied repeatedly point this out. Swami Shiv Dayal Singh writes:

> There is no salvation for *vāchak gyānīs,* for they only talk. In the case of true *gyānīs* (who have reached *Brahman*), the *sthūl* (gross) *karmas* only are destroyed, but not the *sūkshma* (subtle) *karmas,* as they can be destroyed only after reaching the region of the saints *(sants).* It must be born in mind that only saints *(sants)* can lead (souls) to salvation in this age, because there can be no salvation unless all *karmas,* both gross and subtle, are destroyed, and the *gyānīs* do not know the technique of destroying *karmas.*
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Prose 2:206, SBAT pp.116–17*

A distinction is therefore made between a person who only talks outwardly about knowledge (a *bāchak gyānī*), and one who has inwardly realized that knowledge (a *laksh gyānī*), and for whom such realization requires no further effort:

> If you say that a *gyānī* is not required to make any effort,
> this is true of *laksh gyānīs* (gnostics),
> but it is not fitting for a *bāchak (gyānī)* to say that.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 24:1.81–82, SBP p.204*

Kabīr likens the knowledge of intellectuals to the blind men in a well-known story, each of whom, having got hold of a different part of an elephant, describe it differently:

Book knowledge is like the blind men's knowledge of the elephant:
Everyone promotes his own view,
and the seeker wonders what is false, what is true.
Kabīr, Sākhī Sangrah, Vāchak Gyān kā Ang 1, KSS p.77; cf. KWGN p.571

See also: **laksh** (2.2).

vairāgī (H), **bairāgī** (H/Pu) (fem. *vairāgan*) *Lit.* one who has detachment *(vairāga);* specifically, one who has renounced the world and adopted a life of asceticism and renunciation.

ʿInāyat Khān describes the life of a successful *vairāgī,* in particular his mastery of himself, and hence of everything around him:

> There are two kinds of Hindu sages: the *vairāgī* and the *sant.* The one is ascetic, the other is saintly. The life of the *vairāgī* is very surprising, very extraordinary, and it is a great puzzle to those who meet him. One might be quite afraid of a man who was lying down with ashes rubbed all over his face and body, or perhaps sitting almost in a fire. His very appearance is so strange. He may be living in a graveyard outside the city, and going into the city only to obtain food for himself and his friends who are *vairāgīs* like himself. At other times, he goes off into the wilderness and lives there. He spends most of his time in meditation, and in striving after the mastery of the self.
>
> The path which the Hindus follow is one of the four *yogas,* and it is through *haṭha yoga,* the path of abstinence, that the *vairāgī* endeavours to develop his spiritual life. In following this path, practices may be carried out which seem hideous, or at least very strange, to those who do not understand the underlying philosophy or ideal. Whatever he does, the object is to reach the spirit by killing everything that hides the spirit from his sight. One might say that he considers himself to be his own enemy, so he crushes everything that is not spirit, everything that interferes with his spiritual progress. He seeks to kill all that is mortal within himself, realizing that in this way he can attain to a higher and more powerful life.
>
> No words can ever describe the experience he gains. No one else but he himself can possibly understand his experiences; it is like asking a child who has never eaten sugar what the word 'sweet' means. Only they can understand the idea of sweet who have experienced sweetness. So a *vairāgī* is very powerful; to perform a miracle all he has to do is to flick his hand. His whole life seems to stand before him as his obedient servant; all who see a *vairāgī* know that he is the master of life.

Once one is master of self, one is master of life. The self is that which makes our life limited, so when we master it, we master life, and we become its master in proportion to the degree in which we have attained self-mastery. Such a person is master even of plants and trees, or any living being; he has mastered everything. We cannot easily appreciate this, for it is quite unintelligible until one has oneself developed that mastery in one's own life. Then it is possible to see how life seems to become obedient in all manner of relationships.

Do we not see, even in our own limited experience, how things go wrong when we have become weak in will or mind in one affair or another? It is not possible to master the conditions of life until we have learned to control ourselves. Once we have mastery over ourself everything will go right. It is just the same as when a rider has no strength in his fingers, so that he cannot hold the horse's reins. His fingers must obey his mind before the horse will obey. This is true of all circumstances in life, and of all the various conditions around us, our relations, our friends. We may complain that no one listens, that our servant does not do what we wish him to do, that our assistants do not carry out our orders. We may blame them when all the time it is ourselves who are to blame because we have not mastered ourselves first. After we have done this, they will obey.

The *vairāgī* learns his lesson mainly through abstinence. Why is this? Because things go wrong through our own weakness; we do not do what we wish to do; we consider ourselves so small that we cannot achieve our own wishes.

There are many wonderworkers among the sages of the *vairāgī* category. But do not think that they will mount a platform and perform! Anyone who walks on to a stage to show off miracles is false, not real. The real *vairāgī* aims at his own mastery, and is not concerned with doing tricks for the world to see, so no one sees them. The *vairāgī*'s whole life is a wonder, and yet the world is unaware of it. Not only is he a wonder in himself, but the whole world is a wonder to him, so great is his vision, his power, his inspiration. But his life is a very hard one; it is a great renunciation. . . .

So you cannot imagine anyone in the East, and especially in India, not longing from the time he was born for the day when he can become a sage. Whatever may have been his occupation, profession, business, trade, or family, he will have been longing for that moment when he could become a *vairāgī* at last, when he could cast off the load of responsibility that he had carried on his back all those years. He has longed for the time when he can give himself over to thinking about Truth, having now peace and rest and opportunity to communicate with the eternal Being. He has all the time been hoping for his desire to be

> granted when he may have a rest, with enough time to think of God and live that life wherein one becomes capable of being one with God.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, SMIK12 pp.108–9, 111*

See also: **vairāg** (▸4).

Vaishṇava (S/H) *Lit.* of *Vishṇu;* a worshipper of *Vishṇu* and his incarnations *(avatāras),* especially Rāma and Kṛishṇa, as the supreme God; a Vaishnavite; also, one of the principal schools of devotional Hinduism. See **Vaishṇava** (▸3).

vānaprastha (S) *Lit.* gone to or dwelling in *(prastha)* the forest *(vana);* an anchorite, a hermit; one who has withdrawn from worldly life into solitude in quest of the spiritual enlightenment; one who has partially renounced the world; one who has entered the third stage *(āshrama)* of traditional Hindu life, following that of the student or celibate young man *(brahmachārin)* and the householder *(gṛihastha),* and prior to that of the complete renunciate *(sannyāsin);* also called a *vanavāsin* or *vanavāsī* (forest dweller). This stage is open to men or women, or to couples. Some devote themselves to worship of the gods, to religious ceremonies, and to austerities *(tapas);* others practise meditation for long periods at a stretch, and are bordering on the life of a full *sannyāsin.*

The *Manu Smṛiti* lays out detailed rules for living the life of a *vānaprastha.* Such a life, says Manu, is permissible after passing through the first two stages of life:

> A twice-born *snātaka* (a *brāhmaṇ* who has fulfilled the duties of a *brahmachārin*), who has discharged the duties of a householder *(gṛihastha),* may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his passions under control, dwell in the forest *(vana).*
>
> When a householder *(gṛihastha)* sees his skin wrinkled and his hair white, and sees the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest *(araṇya).* Abandoning all food raised by cultivation, and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest *(vana),* either committing his wife to his sons or accompanied by her.
>
> Taking with him the sacred fire and the implements required for domestic sacrifices, let him go forth from the village into the forest *(araṇya)* and reside there, peaceful and self-controlled. Let him offer the five great sacrifices according to the (Vedic) rule, with various kinds of pure food fit for sages *(munis),* or with herbs, roots, and fruit.
>
> Let him be clad in skins, rags, or the bark of trees; bathe each day, morning and evening; and let him always wear matted hair, and with the hair on his body, his beard, and his nails (remaining uncut). Out of

> his own food let him make offerings and gifts to the poor, to the best of his ability; let him honour those who come to his hermitage with offerings of water, roots, and fruit.
>
> Let him be always industrious in the study of the *Vedas;* let him be patient of hardships, friendly towards all, of collected mind, ever generous and never a receiver of gifts, and compassionate towards all living creatures.
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:1–8; cf. MSDN pp.209–10, SBE25 pp.198–200*

He should also, continues Manu, practise various Vedic sacrifices and offerings, preparing the correct food in the prescribed manner, after which he may eat the remainder. The prevailing instruction is that the forest dweller's food should consist of vegetables, roots, fruits, grains and so on that have grown wild in the forest, rather than by cultivation. He may cook or grind his food. He may also store food for up to a year. He should give away his old clothing and surplus food store in the month of *Āshvina* (during the rainy season, August–September):

> Using grains fit for sages *(muni),* which grow in spring and autumn, which he himself has collected, let him severally prepare oblations *(charu)* of sacrificial cakes *(puroḍāsha)* and so on, as (Vedic) law directs.
>
> Having first offered these oblations (to the gods) of sacred forest produce, he may use the remainder for himself, using salt that he himself has prepared. Let him eat vegetables that grow on dry land or in water, flowers, roots, and fruits, the produce of sacred forest trees, and oils pressed out from forest seeds. Let him avoid honey, flesh, and mushrooms, and *bhūstṛiṇa* (*Andropogon schoenanthus,* an aromatic grass), *shigru* (*Moringa oleifera,* horseradish tree, or any culinary herb), and *shleshmātaka (Cordia latifolia)* fruits.
>
> In the month of *Āshvina,* let him give away his store of food grains fit for sages *(munis),* which he had formerly collected, and likewise cast away his worn-out clothes and his store of vegetables, roots, and fruit.
>
> Let him not eat anything grown on ploughed land, even if it has been offered voluntarily by somebody, nor roots and fruit grown in a village, though he may be tormented (by hunger).
>
> He may eat his food by cooking it over a fire, or what has been ripened in course of time; he either may use a stone for grinding, or his teeth may be his mortar. He may lay up a store of food sufficient for a day, a month, for six months, or a year.
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:11–18; cf. MSDN pp.210–11, SBE25 pp.200–2*

His eating may also be regulated by various fasting regimes:

> Having collected food according to his ability, he may either eat at night (only), or in the daytime (only), or at every fourth mealtime, or at every eighth; or he may live according to the rule of the lunar penance (*chāndrāyaṇa,* daily diminishing the quantity of his food) during the bright half of the month, and (increasing it) during the dark half; or he may eat boiled barley gruel on the last day of each fortnight (full and new moon), once a day only; or he may subsist solely on flowers, roots, and fruit, which have been ripened by time and have fallen spontaneously, following the rule of *Vikhanas* (a *muni* of old).
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:19–21; cf. MSDN pp.211–12, SBE25 p.202*

He must also practise other austerities:

> Let him either roll about on the ground, or stand during the day on tiptoe, (or) let him alternately stand and sit down, going to the forest to perform his ablutions at sunrise, midday, and sunset.
>
> In summer, let him practise the *pañcha-tapas* (the five fires, expose himself to the heat of five fires), during the rainy season live under the open sky, and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, gradually increasing (the rigour of) his austerities.
>
> When he performs the three ablutions, let him offer libations of water to the ancestors and the gods *(pitṛi-devā),* and practising harsher and harsher austerities, let him purify his bodily frame.
>
> Having reposited the three sacred fires in himself, according to the prescribed rule, let him live without a fire, without a house, wholly silent, subsisting on roots and fruit, making no effort (to procure) things that give pleasure, chaste, sleeping on bare ground, caring for no shelter other than the shade of a tree.
>
> Let him receive alms, sufficient only to support life, from *brāhmaṇ* ascetics *(tapasvīs)* or other householders of the twice-born (castes) who reside in the forest. Or one who dwells in the forest *(vanavāsī)* may get food from the village; receiving it in the hollow of his palm, or in a chip of bark, or in a cup made of a tree leaf, let him eat eight mouthfuls thereof.
>
> These and other observances must a sage who dwells in the forest *(vipro vane vasan)* diligently practise, and in order to attain perfection of the Self, he must ponder over the sacred texts contained in the *Upanishads,* whose contents have been practised and studied by the sages *(ṛishis)* and by *brāhmaṇ* householders in order to increase their understanding and their austerity, and for the purification of themselves.
>
> (And when he feels his end coming upon him), let him walk straight in a north-easterly direction, rapt in *yoga,* subsisting on water and air, until he quits this mortal life.

> A *brāhmaṇ,* quitting his body by these means practised by the great sages *(maharshi),* is exalted in the world of *Brahman,* free from sorrow and fear.
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:22–32; cf. MSDN pp.212–13, SBE25 pp.202–4*

In practice, according to the *Jābāla Upanishad,* a person can enter the stage of a *vānaprastha* whenever they feel drawn to it:

> After completing the life of a *brahmacharya* (unmarried student), let a man become a householder *(gṛihī).* After completing the life of a householder *(gṛihī),* let him become a forest dweller *(vanī),* let him renounce all things. Or he may renounce all things directly from the student state *(brahmacharya)* or from the householder's *(gṛiha)* state as well as from that of a forest dweller *(vanāt).* Whether one has completed the vows or not, whether one is student *(snātaka)* or not, even if one has not completed the rites, on the very day that one becomes indifferent (to the world), on that same day should one leave and become a renunciate.
>
> *Jābāla Upanishad 4; cf. PU pp.896–97*

See also: **araṇyavāsin**, **āshrama** (▸4), **vanavāsin**.

vanavāsin, **vanavāsī** (S) *Lit.* forest *(vana)* dweller *(vāsin);* one who has withdrawn from worldly life into solitude in quest of the spiritual enlightenment; one who has partially renounced the world; one who has entered the third stage *(āshrama)* of traditional Hindu life, following that of the student or celibate young man *(brahmachārin)* and the householder *(gṛihastha),* and prior to that of the complete renunciate *(sannyāsin);* also called a *vānaprastha* ('gone to the forest'). This stage is open to men or women, or to couples. Some devote themselves to worship of the gods, to religious ceremonies, and to austerities *(tapas);* others practise meditation for long periods at a stretch, and are bordering on the life of a full *sannyāsin.*

In Jainism, *vanavāsī* was used for fully initiated mendicant monks who lived an itinerant lifestyle except during the four months *(chatur-māsa)* of the rainy season (when travel would harm the many small life forms that flourish at that time), and who became known as *saṃvegī sādhus,* also called *munis, sādhus,* or *sants.* The *vanavāsīs* were contrasted with sedentary temple dwellers *(chaityavāsīs),* whose lifestyle and conduct were regarded as lax by the more austere *vanavāsīs.*

See also: **chaityavāsin**, **vānaprastha**.

vāstrya (Av) *Lit.* protector, guardian; shepherd; a term used by Zarathushtra in his *Gāthās* for the spiritual master; by contrast, the false shepherd is designated the *avāstrya* (the non-protector). When the soul in human form begins to awaken to its situation, writes Zarathushtra, the first thing it asks of God is for someone who can show it the way out:

> The living soul *(geush urvā)* complained to God:
> "Why did you create me? Who fashioned me?
> Passion *(aēshma),* pillage, aggression everywhere,
> and violence enmesh me all around;
> None have I to protect me save Yourself.
> Therefore, reveal to me a great shepherd *(vohu vāstrya)*
> who can show me the way out."
>
> *Zarathushtra, Yasna 29:1; cf. DSZ p.33*

Such a shepherd is the fountain of all divine qualities, especially of the *Vohu Manah* (First Mind) or *Vahishta Manah* (Highest Mind), terms for the Primal Intelligence or creative power of God:

> Where does Your all-embracing love reside?
> Where does compassion flow?
> Where can we contact the mystic Truth *(Ashā)?*
> Where can holy loving devotion *(ārmaiti)* be found?
> Where dwells your Highest Mind *(Vahishta Manah)?*
> Where, O *Mazdā,* the Power *(Xshathra)* that emanates from You?
>
> Ask all these questions of the shepherd *(vāstrya)*
> whose actions are imbued with righteousness,
> who, through Truth *(Ashā),* brings life,
> possessing, through humility, a wisdom deep.
> To the wise, he will reveal himself
> as the teacher *(ratu)* of Truth, and conveyor of all blessings.
>
> *Zarathushtra, Yasna 51:4–5; cf. DSZ pp.773–76*

A human being must therefore choose between the divine shepherd and the power of negativity and evil:

> Yours is loving devotion *(ārmaiti);* Yours, too, O *Mazdā Ahura,*
> the Spirit of Wisdom *(Xratu Mainyu)* that has made the soul.
> For You have given the soul a choice:
> either to leave the shelter of the good shepherd *(vāstrya),*
> or that of him who a shepherd *(vāstrya)* never was.

Between these two, the soul must choose,
as shepherd *(vāstrya)* and protector *(fshuyant)* for herself,
a king *(ahu)* possessed of Truth *(ashavan),*
a champion of Your First Mind *(Vohu Manah);*
For never, O *Mazdā,* can the false shepherd *(avāstrya),*
though he be of pious mien, share in Your divine message.
Zarathushtra, Yasna 31:9–10; cf. DSZ pp.202–6

Zarathushtra even suggests – posing it as a question to God – that those who try to obscure the message of a saviour, trying to come between him and his disciples, will be subject to the law of natural justice:

This do I ask, O *Ahura,* what punishment is mete
for those who encourage the power of the Deceiver,
who uphold evildoers –
Who seek no other aim in life
but to separate the shepherd *(vāstrya),* the loving one,
from his human flock?
Zarathushtra, Yasna 31:15; cf. DSZ p.225

See also: **ashavan**, **fshuyant**, **māthrā**, **ratu**, **saoshyant**.

vāsudeva (S) *Lit.* beneficent *(vasu)* deity *(deva);* a name of God, especially as the all-pervading, benevolent, and omnipresent *Vishṇu;* a name of Kṛishṇa; one of the five classes of *shalākā-purusha* (illustrious or worthy men) in Jain mythology. In the metaphysics of *Vishishṭa Advaita* (qualified non-dualism) expounded by Rāmānuja, *Vāsudeva* refers to God, conceived of in a personal manner – as merciful and compassionate towards errant humanity.

See also: **shalākā-purusha**.

videhamukta (S/H) *Lit.* liberated *(mukta)* without *(vi)* body *(deha);* one who has attained *videhamukti* (liberation after leaving the body); contrasted with *jīvanmukta* (one liberated while living). The schools of Indian philosophy differ over whether those who attain union with *Brahman* while still living in the body *(jīvanmukti)* are influenced by their remaining *prārabdha* (destiny) *karma.* Those who maintain that such an influence exists, say that the highest *mukti* is achieved only when the soul leaves the body at death. Such a soul is a *videhamukta.*

Videhamukti is generally understood to be the final and complete liberation attained after death, when the *karma* of destiny, which keeps the soul in the

body, has all been gone through. *"Videhamukti* arises from the destruction of *prārabdha karma,"* says the *Muktikā Upanishad,*[1] while the *Yogakuṇḍalī Upanishad* simply says that *videhamukti* is attained when the body of a *jīvanmukta* "meets with dissolution".[2]

The *Tejobindu Upanishad,* on the other hand, attempts to differentiate between the two, both of which are regarded as attainable during human life. In essence, in *jīvanmukti* the *ātman* (self, soul) is aware of its oneness with *Brahman,* while in *videhamukti* even that awareness of oneness has dissolved in the absolute unity of *Brahman.* According to the narrative, the matter is explained by the deity *Shiva,* understood mythologically to have been the first yogi. Kumāra, the son of *Shiva,* asks his father: "Please explain to me the nature of *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti.*" *Shiva* responds by first describing the attributes of a *jīvanmukta:*

> He is truly a *jīvanmukta* who simply rests alone in the *ātman,* realizing: "I am the consciousness of the *ātman.* I am the transcendent *ātman.* I am without attributes *(nirguṇa),* beyond the transcendent."
>
> He is truly a *jīvanmukta* who realizes: "I am beyond the three bodies; I am pure consciousness; I am *Brahman.*"[3]
>
> He is truly a *jīvanmukta* who realizes: "My nature is supreme bliss; I am supreme and exquisite bliss; I have neither body nor anything else except the certainty, 'I am *Brahman.*'"
>
> He is truly a *jīvanmukta* who has no sense of I-ness, who remains fixed in consciousness alone; whose interior is absolute consciousness; who is of the one form of absolute consciousness. . . .
>
> He is truly a *jīvanmukta* who realizes: "Not mine the mind *(chitta);* not mine the intellect *(buddhi);* neither ego *(ahankāra),* nor senses; not mine the body at any time; not mine the vital energies *(prāṇas);* not mine illusion *(māyā);* not mine passion and anger. I am the transcendent *Brahman;* nothing of this world is mine; I have no blemish, no characteristics, no eye, no mind *(manas),* no ear, no nose, no tongue, no hand, no waking, no dreaming, not even a tiny part of the causal *(kāraṇa)* state; not mine the fourth (*turīya,* transcendental) state."
>
> *Tejobindu Upanishad 4:1–4, 7–11; cf. TMU pp.68–69, YU pp.50–51*

The *Upanishad* goes on to list all the other things that the *jīvanmukta* realizes that he is not. This includes time, space, thought, worship, wealth, birth, relatives, and so on, concluding:

> He is truly a *jīvanmukta* who, resting in himself, enjoys the bliss of his own *ātman,* . . . who is lord of his own *ātman.*
>
> *Tejobindu Upanishad 4:32; cf. TMU p.69, YU p.54*

The author then continues by describing the nature of a *videhamukta:*

> He alone is a *videhamukta* who has become *Brahman;* who has found tranquillity in his own *ātman;* who is full of the bliss of the *Brahman;* who is happy; who has become as pure as crystal; who is profoundly silent.
>
> He alone is a *videhamukta* who remains in consciousness alone without even thinking: "I am all *Ātman,* the *Ātman* that is the same in all, the Pure, the Non-dual, the All, the only Self, the Birthless, and the Deathless." . . . He is a *videhamukta* who, having abandoned the thought: "I alone am Brahman," is filled with bliss.
>
> *Tejobindu Upanishad 4:33–34, 38; cf. TMU pp.69–70, YU pp.54–55*

As before, the *Upanishad* then expands upon the theme, concluding with the advice:

> Look upon the *ātman* alone; know it as your own. Enjoy your *ātman* yourself, and remain at peace. . . . Be satisfied in your own *ātman;* be the director of your own *ātman;* enjoy your own *ātman.* Then you will become a *videhamukta.*
>
> *Tejobindu Upanishad 4:80–81; cf. TMU p.71, YU pp.60–61*

See also: **jīvanmukta**, **jīvanmukti** (▸3), **videhamukti** (▸3).

1. *Muktikā Upanishad* 2:1.1; *cf. TMU* p.5.
2. *Yogakuṇḍalī Upanishad* 3:33–35, *YU* pp.277–78.
3. *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* 1:4.10.

vidvas (S/H), **vidvān** (S/Pu), **vidyāvān** (H) (pl. S. *vidvānsaḥ*) *Lit.* possessing knowledge *(vidyā);* one who knows; a learned person, a scholar; also, a spiritually wise person, a wise man, a sage, a gnostic, a mystic; like *vidyā,* the term can have both mystical and intellectual connotations, depending on the context.

The term has an ancient history. Long before the *Upanishads* were written, the *Atharva Veda* speaks of the *vidvān* as the wise man, the mystic, or gnostic – one who knows the immortal soul *(ātman):*

> Desireless, steadfast, immortal, self-existent,
> full of bliss, lacking nothing, is the one who knows *(vidvān)* –
> the unaging, youthful *ātman:*
> No fear of death has he!
>
> *Atharva Veda 10:8.44; cf. in VE p.538*

Throughout the *Upanishads, vidvān* is commonly used for the one who is spiritually wise – once again, the true sage or mystic:

> When a seer *(pashya)* sees the self-effulgent Creator, the Lord, the supreme Being *(Purusha),* the source of *Brahmā,* then – becoming a gnostic *(vidvān),* going beyond virtue and sin *(puṇya-pāpa),* and free from stain – he attains supreme union *(saṃyam).*...
>
> The soul *(ātmā)* is not attained by the faint-hearted, nor through heedlessness *(pramāda),* nor by austerities. The wise *(vidvān)* who strive with vigour – their souls *(ātmā)* enter the dwelling place of *Brahman.*...
>
> Just as flowing rivers merge into the ocean, losing name and form, even so the gnostic *(vidvān),* freed from name and form, reaches the divine Being, the highest of the high.
>
> *Muṇḍaka Upanishad 3:1.3, 3:2.4, 8*

> To one whose mind is tranquil, with senses under control, and who approaches in the right manner, let the gnostic *(vidvān)* impart knowledge of *Brahman (brahmavidyā)* in its very essence – that by which one knows the true, imperishable Being *(Purusha).*
>
> *Muṇḍaka Upanishad 1:2.13*

In the *Prashna Upanishad,* a seeker asks about the after-death fate of someone who passes their entire life meditating upon *Aum,* the creative power. He is told that such a wise man will reach either the lower *(apara)* or the higher *(para) Brahman:*

> Truly, the sound *Aum*...is both the higher and the lower *Brahman.* Therefore, with its help alone, the wise man *(vidvān)* reaches either the one or the other.... Taking only the sound *Aum* as his helper, the wise man *(vidvān)* attains that which is tranquil, unaging, immortal, fearless, and supreme.
>
> *Prashna Upanishad 5:2, 7*

The *Kaivalya Upanishad* indicates that, through knowledge of *Brahman,* the *vidvān* can find God:

> O *Bhagavān,* teach me that knowledge *(vidyā)* of *Brahman,* forever sought by the good, which is hidden, and by which a wise man *(vidvān),* freed from all evil, can reach the highest Being *(Purusha).*
>
> *Kaivalya Upanishad 1:1*

Consequently, the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upanishad* extols the virtues of spiritual or inner worship:

> The wise *(vidvānsaḥ)* consider spiritual *(mānasa)* worship (to be the means of liberation). Wise men *(vidvānsaḥ)* therefore delight only in spiritual *(mānasa)* worship.
>
> *Mahānārāyaṇa Upanishad 78:11; cf. MUSV p.320*

The *Bhagavad Gītā* observes that most people act out of selfishness and are consequently attached to the results of their actions. A wise man *(vidvān),* on the other hand, is unselfish and an inspiration to others:

> Just as the ignorant act out of attachment, so should a wise man *(vidvān)* act without attachment, keeping in view the good of the world.
>
> But a wise man *(vidvān)* should not disturb the minds of the unwise in their attachment to (the fruits of their) actions. By doing everything in a spirit of harmony, he should inspire others to act as he does.
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 3:25–26*

The ninth-century (CE) Vedantic philosopher and mystic Shankara uses the term for a purely learned man,[1] as well as for a seeker of the higher wisdom and for the advanced mystic:

> The wise man *(vidvān)* should strive his best for liberation *(vimukti),* having renounced his desire for the pleasures of external things, approaching a good and generous master *(deshika)* in the proper manner, and fixing his mind on the Truth inculcated by him. . . .
>
> Fear not, O wise man *(vidvān),* there is no death for you; there *is* a means of crossing the ocean of this world *(saṃsāra):* I will show you the very way by which sages *(yatis)* have gone beyond it. . . .
>
> The gnostic *(vidvān)* realizes in his heart, through *samādhi,* the infinite *Brahman,* which is of the nature of eternal knowledge and absolute bliss, which has no exemplar, which transcends all limitations, is ever free and always still, and which is like the limitless sky – indivisible, and absolute *(nirvikalpa).* . . .
>
> The gnostic *(vidvān)* realizes in his heart, through *samādhi,* the infinite *Brahman,* which is undecaying and immortal, which is Reality itself, which is pure existence, which resembles the placid ocean and is nameless, in which there are no changes or attributes, and which is eternal, tranquil, and One. . . .
>
> The gnostic *(vidvān)* sage *(muni),* whose only delight is in the Self *(Ātman),* is always at ease, whether going or staying, sitting or lying, or in any other condition. . . .

> As a child plays with its toys forgetting hunger and bodily pains, just so does the gnostic *(vidvān)* delight in Reality, and is happy, with no thought of 'I' or 'mine'.
>
> *Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 8, 43, 408, 410, 528, 537; cf. VCSM pp.4, 16, 154–55, 197, 200*

In more recent times, Swami Shiv Dayal Singh speaks of the *vidyāvān* as the learned and scholars:

> Lovers who have no learning
> can remain in the company of saints *(sant).*
> But among the learned *(vidyāvān),*
> not even one can stay with them.
> Understand learning to be an obstacle on the path.
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 24:3.28–29, SBP p.210*

> The wisdom *(buddhi)* of intellectuals *(buddhivān)* is obscured:
> not a thing do those learned ones *(vidyāvān)* attain.
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 24:1.143, SBP p.206*

See also: **vidyā** (▸3).

1. *E.g.* Shankara, *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi* 16, 162.

vidyā-charaṇa-sampanna (S), **vijjā-caraṇa-sampanna** (Pa) *Lit.* consummate *(sampanna)* in wisdom *(vidyā, vijjā)* and conduct *(charaṇa, caraṇa);* perfect in wisdom and behaviour; one of the stock epithets of the Buddha, of frequent occurrence in Buddhist texts, in Pali, Sanskrit, and other languages:

> The Blessed One *(Bhagavant)* is an *arahanta* (noble one, enlightened one), fully enlightened *(sammā-sambuddha),* perfect in true wisdom and conduct *(vijjā-caraṇa-sampanna),* one who has gone the right way *(sugata),* knower of the universe *(lokavid),* incomparable teacher of those who can be taught *(anuttara-purisa-damma-sārathi),* teacher of gods and men *(satthā-deva-manussānaṃ),* the Awakened One *(Buddha),* the Blessed One *(Bhagavant).*
>
> *Saṃyutta Nikāya 12:41, Pañcabhayavera Sutta, PTSS2 p.69*

Probably the earliest occurrence of the expression in Buddhist texts is in the *Dhammapada,* where the Buddha counsels:

> Like a well-trained horse touched by a whip, be strenuous and zealous;
> And by faith, by virtue, by effort, by meditation *(samādhi),*
> by understanding the *Dhamma,* and by being mindful *(patissata),*
> and endued with wisdom and good conduct *(sampanna-vijjā-caraṇa),*
> you will rid yourself of this great suffering *(dukkha).*
>
> *Dhammapada 10:16*

According to the *Visuddhimagga,*[1] the knowledge or wisdom of the Buddha is either threefold or eightfold. His threefold knowledge (S. *trividyā,* Pa. *tevijjā*) consists of three forms of supramundane knowledge *(abhiññā),* mentioned in various Buddhist texts:[2]

1. Knowledge of the past lives of other beings, also called the divine eye *(dibba-cakkhu).*
2. Recollection of his own previous lives *(pubbe-nivāsānussati).*
3. The knowledge of an enlightened being, and the ability to understand things as they truly are through the destruction of all mental impurities *(āsavakkhaya).*

Again according to the *Visuddhimagga,* the Buddha's eightfold wisdom comprises the six supramundane kinds of intuitive knowledge *(abhiññās),* together with insight *(vipassanā)* and supernormal power *(iddhi). Caraṇa* (good conduct) covers the fifteen virtues or ethical principles. "It is precisely by means of these fifteen things, by which a noble disciple conducts himself, that he goes towards the Deathless":[3]

1. Morality, restraint in deed and word.
2. Restraint and guarding of the senses.
3. Moderation in eating.
4. Devotion to wakefulness.
5. Confidence, maintaining clear vision in faith.
6. Moral shame, realization of shame in committing evil.
7. Moral dread, realization of fear in committing evil.
8. Thirst for learning and knowledge.
9. Enthusiasm, energy, and effort.
10. Mindfulness.
11. Wisdom.

12–15. The four levels of *jhāna* (states of meditative absorption).

See also: **abhijñā** (7.3), **trividyā** (7.3).

1. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 7:30, *PTSV* p.202, *PPVM* p.194.
2. *E.g. Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.78–84; *Majjhima Nikāya* 4, *Bhayabherava Sutta, PTSM1* pp.22–23; *Majjhima Nikāya* 19, *Dvedhāvitakka Sutta, PTSM1* pp.117.
3. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 7:31, *PTSV* p.202; *cf. PPVM* p.195.

vidyādhara (S), **vijjādhara** (Pa) *Lit.* holder *(dhara)* of knowledge *(vidyā);* possessor of special knowledge, possessor of magical powers; a class of mythological Himalayan supernatural beings or demigods, attendants of *Shiva;* a wizard or sorcerer possessing magical powers such as flight, ability to change size at will, transmute base metals into gold, and live an extraordinarily long life; one who has acquired supernatural powers through tantric practice; in tantric Buddhism, a kind of immortal wizard, magician or wonderworker; regarded by some texts as the guardians of tantric teachings.

The tantric, *Vajrayāna* or esoteric Buddhist tradition maintains that the *tantras,* also known as the *Vidyādhara Piṭaka* ('Basket of the Holders of Knowledge'), represent the 'fourth basket' of the Buddha's teachings, in addition to the conventional 'three baskets' *(tripiṭaka)* of the *vinaya* (monastic code), *sūtras* (teachings), and *abhidharma* (analysis and commentary). In fact, some sources insist that the teachings of the *tripiṭaka* are only a preparation for tantric practice.

The *vijjādhara* is the origin of the Burmese Buddhist *weikza* (short for *weikzado*) who is said to have taken a vow to remain in the world for the benefit of Buddhist seekers until the coming of the next *buddha,* Maitreya. At that time, the *weikza* will attain *nirvāṇa* or take a vow to become a *buddha* himself in order to lead others to enlightenment. The path of the *weikza (weikza-lam)* is regarded in Burmese Buddhism as the third of three alternative paths. The first is the performance of good deeds, which is understood to lead to better births in the future; the second is *vipassanā* (Pa. insight meditation), whose goal is enlightenment *(bodhi)* and *nirvāṇa. Weikza-lam* is a path of incantations, alchemy, and *shamatha* (tranquillity meditation), similar in many respects to the Buddhist tantric tradition. As an expression of teachings that differ from the Pali Buddhist texts, it is sometimes regarded with mistrust. Practitioners of *weikza* generally avoid the practice of *vipassanā,* in case it leads them to *nirvāṇa* when they themselves wish to remain in this world to be of spiritual help to others.[1]

See also: **Vajrayāna** (▸3).

1. See "Myanmar," "Vidyādhara," *Encyclopedia of Buddhism, EBRB.*

vipassanā-yānika, **suddha-vipassanā-yānika** (Pa) *Lit.* one who makes pure *(suddha)* insight *(vipassanā)* his vehicle *(yānaka);* one who practises insight meditation *(vipassanā-bhāvanā);* an insight practitioner. See **samatha-yānika**.

visionary A person of vision, implying someone with a strong mental idea or ideal of something they would like to see actualized; in a mystical context, a person who has visions of a religious or spiritual nature, which may be physical or mental in character, and can be real or imagined; a mystic.

Mystical visions can be of many types, depending on the temperament, beliefs, and spiritual evolution of the visionary. One thinks of the biblical Ezekiel, whose four fantastical visions have been the subject of much and varied interpretation by later Jewish mystics and others;[1] or the apocryphal writers of the books of *Enoch* and *Baruch,* with their transcendent trips into the heavenly regions and their apocalyptic visions; or the cosmogonic visions of the gnostics; or the many Christian mystic visionaries who have experienced visions of Jesus, angels, and other things associated with the Christian faith. Numbered among the latter are Paul on the road to Damascus,[2] the author of the New Testament *Revelations,* and a host of later mystics, such as Teresa of Ávila, Mechthild of Magdeburg, and Henry Suso.

It is true that 'revelations' were a literary form of ancient times, and many ancient texts are most probably the product of little more than the fertile religious imagination of their inspired authors. But there is no doubt that visionary experience exists, manifesting in a wide spectrum of varieties. Since a great many visions are an expression of or related to the beliefs of the visionary, it is clear that the mind and imagination of the visionary is usually involved in the process. Many visions may be the projection of deep-felt beliefs upon the inner screen of the mind. But this does not necessarily invalidate the vision, or sideline it into the class of 'mere imagination'.

Visions are generally experienced by those who practise contemplation or inner prayer; or sometimes spontaneous visionary experiences may lead a person to inner contemplation. As such, their goal becomes the expansion of their own inner consciousness, their essential spirituality. Inwardly focused, fully conscious, with the eyes closed to external stimuli, and an inner being expanded by long habituation to the practice, it is not surprising that there are many different types of vision. And since the mind of the visionary is naturally a part of this process, such visions will reflect the content of his (or her) mind – together with all his beliefs and cultural images. But beyond and behind all such mental activity, there lies the divine Principle, the essential Reality, the absolute Truth, the supreme Spirit, the universal Consciousness – in a word, God. Genuine experience of *that* is beyond imagination; it is a vision

of what is truly real. And lying between the human and the Divine, there are also all the heavenly regions – higher realms of mind and consciousness, the experience of which is also visionary.

The writers in the *Philokalia* speak somewhat of this higher experience of the visionary. But first a word on terminology. A term commonly encountered in Greek mystical texts is *nous.* The words and concepts used to describe the inner being of man vary considerably from culture to culture, and there is no one English word that conveys an adequate translation of *nous.* Consequently, it has been translated in a variety of ways. Sometimes, it refers to the essential spiritual part of a human being; sometimes, it is the rational, reasoning intellect; sometimes, the discriminating intelligence; sometimes, the mind in a more general sense. The divine creative power of God is also called His *Nous,* His Intelligence, often equated with His *Logos* or Creative Word. Since *nous* is used throughout the *Philokalia,* it is worth being aware of these translation difficulties.

The key to the ascent into the realm of higher visionary experience, says Maximos the Confessor, is to "ascend in pursuit of the *Logos*". The divine *Logos* draws everything to itself, infusing all parts of the visionary's being with its essential holiness:

> When the *Logos* of God is raised up in us by our practice of the virtues and by contemplation, it draws all things to itself; it sanctifies, in virtue and spiritual knowledge, our thoughts and words about the flesh, the soul, and the nature of beings. It sanctifies also the very members of our bodies and our senses, and it places them all under its yoke. So let the visionary of divine things eagerly ascend in pursuit of the *Logos,* until he reaches the place where it is.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Theology 2:32, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.145*

It is, Maximos continues, the concepts and opinions of the mind, a literal interpretation of scripture, and an intelligence confined only to the things of sensory perception that prevent access to this *Logos:*

> When our mind *(nous)* has shaken off its many opinions about created things, then the inner principle of Truth appears clearly to it, providing it with a foundation of real knowledge, and removing its former preconceptions as though removing scales from the eyes.... For an understanding of scripture that does not go beyond the literal meaning, and a view of the sensible world that relies exclusively on sense perception, are indeed scales, blinding the soul's visionary faculty and preventing access to the pure *Logos* of Truth.
>
> *Maximos the Confessor, On Theology 2:75, Philokalia; cf. PCT2 p.156*

It is through concentration, meditation and "dispassion" that the visionary is able to comprehend these inner mysteries. Firstly, says Nikitas Stithatos, through outer "dispassion" – that is, through control of the passions and practice of the virtues – the powers of the soul automatically rediscover their own natural manner of functioning, and the "mind *(nous)*" is restored "to conscious meditation on things divine". Then, through inner "dispassion" – complete internal stillness – the visionary receives many insights of a mystical nature into the workings of creation. Speaking of "those well advanced on the spiritual path", he says:

> When they embark on the contemplation of the inner essences of created things, they attain, in their wisdom, the second and more perfect kind of dispassion. Bringing inner stillness to their thoughts, this (inward) dispassion raises them to a peaceful state of mind *(nous),* making their mind *(nous)* visionary and prophetic to the highest degree: visionary in matters divine, in insight into supernal realities, and in the disclosure of God's mysteries; prophetic in matters human, destined to happen in the distant future. In both these forms of dispassion, one and the same Spirit is at work: through the first, He controls and sustains; through the second, He dispenses the freedom of eternal life.
>
> *Nikitas Stithatos, On the Practice of the Virtues 89, Philokalia; cf. PCT4 p.103*

Similarly, St Gregory Palamas writes that when the "spirit *(nous)* is illumined by the divine *Logos*", it leads to a purified state of consciousness that automatically sees beyond the normal confines of human perception. Nevertheless, those blessed with such supranatural perception do not seek such perceptions *per se,* they arise naturally from the mystic's focus upon the Divine, just as a man who looks at sunbeams automatically sees the small particles thus illuminated:

> The spirit *(nous)* that has been accounted worthy of this light also transmits to the body that is united with it many clear tokens of the divine beauty, acting as an intermediary between divine grace and the grossness of the flesh, and conferring on the flesh the power to do what lies beyond its power. This gives birth to a godlike, unmatched and stable state of virtue, as well as to a disposition that has no or little inclination to sin.
>
> It is then that the spirit is illumined by the divine *Logos,* who enables it to perceive clearly the inner essences – the *logoi* – of created things, and on account of its purity reveals to it the mysteries of nature. In this way, through relationships of correspondence, the perceiving and trusting intelligence is raised up to the apprehension of

supranatural realities – an apprehension that the Father of the *Logos* communicates through an immaterial union.

From this arise various other miraculous effects, such as visionary insight, the seeing of things future, and the experience of things happening afar off as though they were occurring before one's very eyes. But what is more important is that those blessed in this manner do not aspire to attain such powers. Rather it is as though one were to look at a ray of sunlight and at the same time perceive the small particles in the air, though this was not one's intention.

So it is with those who commune directly with the rays of divine light, which by nature reveal all things: according to their degree of purity, they truly attain – albeit as something incidental – a knowledge of what is past, of what is present, and even of what is to come. But their main concern is the return of the spirit *(nous)* to itself and its concentration on itself. Or, rather, their aim is the reconvergence of all the soul's powers in the spirit *(nous)* – however strange this may sound – and the attaining of the state in which both spirit and God work together. In this way, they are restored to their original state and assimilated to their Archetype, grace renewing in them their pristine and inconceivable beauty.

St Gregory Palamas, To the Nun Xenia 62, Philokalia; cf. PCT4 pp.318–19

See **visions** (▸3).

1. *Ezekiel* chps. 1–3, 8–11, 37, 40–48.
2. *Acts* 9:1*ff., 2 Corinthians* 12:1–4.

vrātya (S) *Lit.* mendicant; a member of a roving brotherhood *(vrāta)* who took a particular religious or spiritual vow or vows *(vrata);* a wandering mendicant monk.

Vrātya[1] is a general name for the members of a number of groups of pre-Vedic, non-Aryan wandering monks, who were originally a part of the Dravidian Indus valley civilization. Their spiritual practices probably foreshadowed the development of *yoga* and *prāṇāyāma,* with at least some of the *vrātyas* practising early forms of these spiritual disciplines. Ancient Indian literature contains many references to the *vrātyas.*[2] Living at the time of the Aryan influx into North India, they were in conflict with the early *brāhmaṇs,* the upholders of Vedic culture, who used the term pejoratively to mean someone of low caste, or someone who had lost his caste through non-performance of obligatory brahmanical rites, or an uninitiated person for whom the sacramental initiatory rites had not been performed and who was therefore regarded as impure. *Vrātyas* are also included by the *Yajur Veda* in

a list of those who are regarded as suitable victims for human sacrifice.[3] With the passage of time, as the two cultures absorbed influences from each other, the beliefs and practices of the *vrātyas* became a significant influence in the development of Brahmanism and Vedic culture.[4] The *vrātyas* were worshippers of *Rudra,* god of the wind and breath, who was later assimilated into *Shiva,* primal deity of the yogis, and regarded as the first yogi. But neither *Shiva* nor *Rudra* were originally Vedic deities, and the character of the *Shiva* known to Hindu tradition evolved over time.

The most extensive account of the *vrātyas* is found in the *Vrātya-Khaṇḍa* of the *Atharva Veda* (*c.*1000 BCE), a eulogistic and mythological poetic narrative in praise of the *vrātya* as the possessor of "great power",[5] and exhibiting many of the attributes of *Rudra* or *Shiva.* He is, for example, the possessor of a special knowledge, and the gods bow down to him:

> The hosts of gods were his attendants,
> solemn vows his messengers, and all creatures his worshippers.
> All creatures become the worshippers of him
> who possesses this knowledge.
>
> *Atharva Veda 15:3.10–11, HAV1 p.188*

In this world, even kings should acknowledge his greatness:

> So let the king, to whose house the *vrātya*
> who possesses this knowledge comes as a guest,
> honour him as superior to himself.
> So that he act not against the interests
> either of his princely rank or his kingdom.
>
> *Atharva Veda 15:10.1–2; cf. HAV1 pp.192–93*

Likewise, should the *vrātya* come to anybody's house as a guest, every effort should be made to see to his comfort, for – so the hymn says – whatever is given to the *vrātya* is secured for the giver, too.[6] Moreover, should the *vrātya* stay overnight, the host will gain access to the heavenly realms, though the verse does not say when this will happen:

> He, in whose house the *vrātya* who possesses this knowledge
> abides for one night, secures for himself thereby
> the holy realms that are on earth.
> A second night, . . . the holy realms that are in the firmament.
> A third night, . . . the holy realms that are in heaven.
> A fourth night, . . . the holy realms of the Holy.
> Unlimited nights, . . . unlimited holy realms.
>
> *Atharva Veda 15:13.1–10, HAV2 p.195*

It is clear from these verses that the *vrātya* is being understood as a holy man. The hymn ends with the observation that at the end of his life, the *vrātya,* having become the lord of all *(parameshṭhin),* enters the heavenly realms, having realized that God *(Brahman)* is the all-pervading Reality, and hence the only doer and the only one who experiences anything:

> When he travelled on to the many inner regions *(antardesha),*
> he travelled on having become the lord of all *(parameshṭhin),*
> understanding *Brahman* to be the one who experiences life.
> He who understands this, experiences life –
> knowing *Brahman* to be the one who (truly) experiences life.
>
> *Atharva Veda 15:14.12*

Interpreting the *Atharva Veda,* some Jain scholars have speculated that the *vrātyas* were in fact the Jains of those times, or at least that the Jains made up a significant proportion of them. The term *mahāvrātya,* as a great leader of the *vrātyas,* is used in the *Atharva Veda,* and it is speculated that this refers to Ṛishabha, the first Jain *Tīrthankara.* Ṛishabha is mentioned by name in the *Ṛig Veda,*[7] along with Neminātha, the twenty-second *Tīrthankara.* The *Yajur Veda* also mentions these two, together with Ajitanātha, the second *Tīthankara.* Based on such evidence, bolstered by traditional belief in the pre-historical antiquity of their religion, Jains contend that Jainism predates Vedic cultures.

Other texts are not as sympathetic towards *vrātyas* as the *Atharva Veda.* The *Manu Smṛiti,* which lays down many rules and regulations concerning the caste system, including punishments for those who step out of line, consistently uses the term *vrātya* in reference to uninitiated outcastes. Those who do not receive the proper sacraments at the right time, it says, are to be regarded as *vrātyas* (outcastes),[8] while sexual intercourse with a *vrātya* is punishable with a "double fine".[9]

In the *Sannyāsa Upanishad, vrātyas* are listed among those who are not entitled to renunciation, presumably because they are uninitiated, and have not performed the requisite purificatory and sacramental rites that make them true members of the community.[10]

See also: **parivrāja**, **shramaṇa**.

1. See L.M. Joshi, *Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, BBHE;* "vrātyas," *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga, EDYF.*
2. *E.g. Atharva Veda* 15; *Yajur Veda, Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā* 30:8; *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 3:4.5.1; *Pañchaviṃsha Brāhmaṇa* 17:1–4; *Shrauta Sūtras of Kātyāyana, Lāṭyāyana,* and *Āpastamba.*
3. *Yajur Veda, Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā* 30:8.

4. See L.M. Joshi, *Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, BBHE.*
5. *Atharva Veda* 15:10.10, *HAV2* p.193.
6. *Atharva Veda* 15:11.1–11, *HAV2* pp.193–94.
7. *Ṛig Veda* 10:102.6.
8. *Manu Smṛiti* 2:39, 10:20.
9. *Manu Smṛiti* 8:373.
10. *Sannyāsa Upanishad* 2:6.

walī (A/P), **walīy** (A) (pl. *awliyā'*) *Lit.* near; hence, friend, relative, close associate, someone near, helper, supporter, benefactor, protector; patron, legal guardian, curator; in Islam, a friend of God; from *waliya* (to be near to, to be close to, to lie next to, to be friends with); an abbreviation of *walī Allāh,* the friend of God who is enveloped in divine companionship; in Sufism, one who is close to God – a saint, a mystic, a holy man of high spiritual attainment, commonly understood to be above all human imperfection, and capable of performing miracles; also, the head of a Sufi order or *khānaqāh* (monastery) or any Muslim religious institution. The *awliyā'* are generally ranked below the level of prophets, who are regarded as more perfected, though the distinction is not adhered to by all Sufis.

The term appears in a number of expressions and derivatives. Sufis speak of attaining the high rank of *walāyat* or *wilāyat* (friendship with God). *Walī al-Sajjādah* ('Friend of the Prayer Rug') is the title of the leader of a Sufi order in his capacity as inheritor of the founder's prayer rug, a traditional symbol of handing on the mantle of mastership; used in the title of Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's well-known book *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā'* ('Memoirs of the Saints'), in which he records teachings and anecdotes concerning many Sufis prior to his time. *Walī al-kāmil* (perfect friend) is one who has completely effaced his own individuality, and has become entirely identified with God. *Walī-i dil* (friend of the heart) is a spiritual master, one who can nourish the spiritual hearts of others. *Walī al-ʿahd* (friend of the time) refers to the crown prince or heir apparent; *walī al-niʿmah* (friend of blessings) is a benefactor. The *awliyā' al-Shayṭān* (friends of Satan) are responsible (together with Satan) for leading human beings astray. They are thus the manifesters of the divine Name *al-Muḍill* (the Misleader), for in Islamic doctrine there is ultimately nothing outside the will of *Allāh,* even negativity.

Walī Allāh is also an epithet of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Muḥammad's cousin, often said to have been the first Sufi, and regarded by *Shīʿahs* as the first *imām.* According to *Shīʿah* belief, ʿAlī was appointed by Muḥammad at Ghadīr al-Khumm (Pool of *Khumm,* an oasis between Mecca and Madīnah), after the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage.

God Himself, in His capacity as companion and helper of human beings, is also called *al-Walīy* (the friend). This is the commonest meaning of the term in

the *Qur'ān,* as in, "God is the friend *(al-Walīy)* of those who believe."[1] It is also said in the *Qur'ān* that the "friends of *Allāh*" experience no fear or suffering:

> Behold! Verily on the friends of *Allāh (awliyā' Allāh),*
> there is no fear, nor shall they grieve;
> Those who believe and guard against evil –
> for them are glad tidings in the present life
> and in the hereafter.
>
> *Qur'ān 10:62–64; cf. AYA*

Paraphrasing the *Qur'ān,* Hujwīrī writes:

> "He loves them and they love Him,"[2] so that they turn away from the favour of mankind: He is their friend *(walī)* and they are His friends *(awliyā').*
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM pp.266–67, KM p.211*

The *awliyā'* are also mentioned among the *ḥadīth* (sayings traditionally ascribed to the Prophet). Expanding on the *Qur'ān,* a *ḥadīth* says:

> Verily, the friends of God fear nothing and grieve for nothing, for they look upon the inner reality of this world, while other men look upon its outward appearance. Also, they look forward to the end of this world, while others look to the immediate present here. They destroy in it what they fear may destroy them, and abandon what they know will abandon them. They are hostile to those things with which other men make peace, and bless the things which other men hate. They show the greatest admiration for the good deeds of others, while they themselves possess goods worthy of the greatest admiration. To them, knowledge is guidance, by which they themselves gain knowledge. They do not put faith except in that for which they hope, nor fear anything except that which should be avoided.
>
> *Ḥadīth, in RMI p.3*

According to the *ḥadīth,* the saints are also difficult to recognize, a matter that became a subject of later Sufi discussion:

> My saints *(awliyā')* are sheltered by My concealment; none knows them but Me.
>
> *Ḥadīth, AMBF 131; cf. MJR7 p.272*

> Verily, God Most High has friends *(awliyā')* who are concealed, their heads begrimed, their faces stained with dust. When they seek to

> approach the Amīr, they are not admitted; when absent, they are not missed and when present, they are not invited; when sick, they are not visited; and if they die, there is none to witness it. They are unknown on the earth and celebrated in heaven.
>
> *Ḥadīth, AMBF 131, in MJR8 p.81*

Another *ḥadīth* observes that it is inadvisable to mistreat saints:

> He who hurts a saint *(walī)* has allowed himself to make war on Me (God).
>
> *Ḥadīth, in Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM p.268, KM p.212*

The expression 'friend of God' predates Islam by centuries if not millennia, and is one of the many terms used for mystics in the Middle East. The term occurs in the biblical *Wisdom of Solomon,* probably dating from the first century BCE, where "Wisdom" refers to the Creative Word of God:

> In each generation, she (Wisdom) passes into holy souls:
> she makes them friends of God *(philoi Theou)* and prophets;
> For God loves only the man who lives with Wisdom.
>
> *Wisdom of Solomon 7:27–28, JB*

And again, in the *Song of Songs* (*c.*500 BCE), the lover speaks symbolically of her mystic beloved:

> His conversation is sweetness itself,
> he is altogether lovable.
> Such is my beloved *(dod),* such is my friend *(reʿa),*
> O daughters of Jerusalem.
>
> *Song of Songs 5:16, JB*

The biblical Abraham is also known in the *Qur'ān*[3] and hence in Islam as Khalīl Allāh ('Friend of God'), alluding to various places in the Bible where Abraham is so described.[4]

The idea that it is God who makes human beings into His friends is characteristic of Sufism, as well as other traditions:

> God has friends *(awliyā'),* whom He has chosen out of mankind, and whose thoughts He has withdrawn from worldly ties and delivered from sensual temptations. And He has stationed each of them in a particular degree, and has opened unto them the door of these mysteries.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV:7, KMM p.265; cf. KM p.210*

Hujwīrī is referring to the common Muslim belief that there is an unseen hierarchy of *awliyā',* differing in their degree of spirituality, whose presence in the world is necessary for the maintenance of stability and harmony. Details differ to some extent, and various accounts concerning them are given by different Sufi writers. Opinion is divided, for example, as to whether the saints know themselves to be such, even if they are the centre of frequent miracles. Some say that were they to become aware of the fact, they would become victims of self-conceit. Others argue that since they are under divine protection, God would protect them from such imperfections.[5] Hujwīrī maintains:

> Among them there are four thousand who are concealed, and do not know one another and are not aware of the excellence of their state, but in all circumstances are hidden from themselves and from mankind.
>
> *Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV, KMM p.269, KM p.213*

Among these are a more select band who include the one (or three) hundred *akhyār* (good); the forty (or seven, or several hundred) *abdāl* (substitutes); the seven *abrār* (righteous); the four *awtād* (supports); the three *nuqabā'* (leaders); and at the head of this hierarchy, the *quṭb* (pivot, axis). There is always a *quṭb* of the time who, together with the hierarchy subordinate to him, acts as the touchstone whereby truth and falsehood may be distinguished. Hujwīrī adds: "All these know one another and cannot act save by mutual consent."[6]

There are also the three *afrād,* who do not fall under the remit of the *quṭb,* and whose attention is directed entirely inward on the divine Essence. The highest degree of sainthood is described as *'ārif billāh* (knower through *Allāh*).

Using *walī* in the sense of the perfect saint, Rūmī maintains that there will always be perfect saints on earth, to help people through their trials and tribulations, for as long as the creation continues:

> Therefore, in every epoch, a saint *(walī)* arises:
> the people's period of trial lasts until the Resurrection.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:815; cf. MJR2 p.263*

A considerable cult associated with the lives of past saints has developed in Islam, often centred around the tombs of holy men. Such shrines are found throughout the Muslim world, both in towns and villages, where they are known by a variety of names, including *dargāh* (court, household, sacred place), *mazār al-walī* (pilgrimage place of a saint), and so on. In China, they are known as *gǒngběi* (dome, cupola). The focus of respect, reverence and devotion, Sufi shrines are visited by petitioners seeking the intercession of the saint in their personal affairs. The saints so commemorated are chosen by local tradition and popular consent, Islam having developed no system of

official canonization as in Christianity. There are even shrines at the tombs of unknown saints.

The shrines are of many types. Some of those of the past, dedicated to the more well-known saints, are ornate and costly mausoleums. Others are little more than a pile of stones, perhaps arranged in a circle, commemorating the day a saint paused there for a rest, or as a memorial to some miracle believed to have been performed at that spot. Modern tombs are generally of a less ostentatious construction than their counterparts of earlier times, commonly consisting of a rectangular structure, which symbolizes the earth, comprised in traditional Arabic philosophy of four basic elements. A domed roof represents heaven, resting upon an octagonal drum, eight being the first number in an arithmetic progression from four (earth) to the infinite-sided circle or dome (heaven). The structure of the tomb therefore symbolizes the role of the saints as mediators between God and human beings. Living mystics have generally agreed that this is the role of the saints, though this applies only to those saints, *shaykhs, pīrs,* or *murshids* who are living. As Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Illāh wrote in his *Ḥikam:*

> Glory be to Him who has made no sign
> leading to His saints *(awliyāʾ),*
> except as a sign leading to Himself;
> And who has joined no one to them,
> except him whom God wants to join to Himself.
> *Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 17:156, SAKH p.46; cf. BWIC p.87*

Saints *(awliyāʾ)* are generally regarded as being of a lesser degree of spirituality than the prophets *(anbiyāʾ).* In the popular mind, however, saints are associated with miracles, which seemed to the orthodox of earlier times to place the saints at the same level as the Prophet. In order to answer this objection, the miracles of the saints were therefore described as *karāmāt* (favours), understood to be bestowed by God upon the saint. By contrast, the miracles performed by a prophet *(nabī)* were called *muʿjizāt,* acts that cannot be imitated. A number of Sufis have pointed out that spirituality does not depend upon the ability to perform miracles. In fact, many have regarded the power to perform miracles as a temptation. Al-Qushayrī observes, "A saint would nonetheless be a saint if no miracles were wrought by him in this world,"[7] while Sahl ibn ʿAbd Allāh says that "the greatest miracle is the substitution of a good quality for a bad one."[8]

Sufis also disagree as to whether or not a saint should observe the external religious observances of Islam, the *sharīʿah.* The orthodox maintain that everyone must follow the *sharīʿah.* A number of Sufis, however, have held that while the *sharīʿah* is a necessary discipline in the initial stages, it may be disregarded by a saint. The saint, it is argued, stands at a higher level than the ordinary man, and cannot be condemned for outwardly irreligious actions.

Many of the older Sufis, on the other hand, have insisted that all Muslims, saints or otherwise, should follow the *sharīʿah.* But the rapid growth in the cult of saint worship tended to encourage the belief that the saints were above the law, and could do no wrong. Even seemingly incongruous actions could not be judged by appearances.

A number of stories are told in Muslim lore concerning the difficulty ordinary mortals have in understanding the actions of saints. The classic story of Moses and al-Khiḍr is related in the *Qur'ān,* in which the seemingly unkind or meaningless actions of al-Khiḍr turn out to have positive benefits because of al-Khiḍr's foreknowledge of future events.[9] For this reason, disciples are advised to discriminate when taking their master's behaviour as an example. As Rūmī summarizes:

> If the saint *(walī)* drinks poison it becomes an antidote:
> if the disciple drinks it, his mind is darkened.
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:2603; cf. MJR2 p.141*

Shīʿahs believe that Muḥammad's appointed successor was ʿAlī. They also hold that the *Mahdī* (divinely guided one) will appear towards the end of the world to usher in a brief period of peace and justice before the final end. *Sunnīs,* on the other hand, maintain that Muḥammad's rightful successor was Abū Bakr, who was succeeded by ʿUmar. Rūmī refers to these beliefs when he writes that the living saint *(walī)* is actually the *imām,* or spiritual leader of his time, whatever his ancestry may have been. He is also both the *Mahdī* and the *hādī* (the guide). Below him, he says, there are other categories of saint. In the same passage, Rūmī also alludes to a Sufi tradition based on a *ḥadīth:*

> *Allāh* has seventy thousand veils of light and darkness: "Were He to withdraw their curtain, then would the splendours of His face surely consume everyone who apprehended Him with his sight."
> *Ḥadīth, in Mishkāt al-Anwār 3:2, MRG4 p.27, MAG p.47; cf. FSC p.157*

Rūmī explains that the veils correspond to the various degrees of sainthood. The lower classes of saint do not ascend to the supreme height of complete divine union:

> That saint *(walī),* then, is the living *imām*
> who arises in every age,
> whether he be a descendant of ʿUmar or ʿAlī.
> He is the *Mahdī* and the *hādī,* O seeker of the Way:
> he is both hidden and seated before your face.
> He is as the Light *(Nūr),*
> and (the divine) Wisdom *(Khirad)* is his Gabriel (*i.e.* messenger);

The saint *(walī)* that is lesser than him
receives illumination from him.
The one who is lesser than this lamp is our lamp niche:
the light has gradations in degree,
because the light of God has seven hundred veils.

Regard the veils of the Light as so many tiers:
behind each veil a certain class (of saints) has its abode.
These veils of theirs ascend, rank by rank, up to the *imām.*
Those in the lowest rank, through their weakness –
their eyes cannot endure the light before them;
And even those in the front rank, from weakness of sight,
cannot support the light that is more advanced.
The light that is the life of the highest
is heartache and tribulation to that squinter;
But the squintnesses, little by little, grow less,
and when he passes beyond the seven hundred (veils),
he becomes the (divine) Sea.

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:817–26; cf. MJR2 pp.263–64

Speaking as ever from his own personal experience, Rūmī also says that the saints *(awliyā')* are well cared for and protected by God. They are also one in the divine Sea:

O son, the saints *(awliyā')* are God's children;
whether absent or present, He is fully aware of them. . . .
He (God) said, "These saints *(awliyā')* are My children in exile,
sundered from dominion and glory;
Despised and orphaned for the sake of probation *(imtiḥān),*
secretly I am their friend *(yār)* and intimate.
All of them are supported by My protection *('iṣmat):*
you may say they are actually parts of Me.
Take heed! Take heed! These are My dervishes:
They are a hundred thousand thousand, yet they are one body."

Rūmī, Maśnavī III:79, 81–84; cf. MJR4 p.9

Rūmī's description of the friends of God generally places them at the highest level. He says that their essence is the *'Aql-i 'aql* (Universal Intelligence), the divine creative power itself:

The friends *(walī)* are the Universal Intelligence *('Aql-i 'aql):*
all intelligences from the beginning to the end
are under their control, like (a string of) camels.

Come now, look upon them with consideration:
There is one guide *(qalāwūz),*
and a hundred thousand souls following him.

Rūmī, Maśnavī I:2498–99; cf. MJR2 p.136

The philosopher is in bondage to things of the intellect;
the pure one *(ṣāfī)* is he that rides as a prince *(shah-suvār)*
on the Universal Intelligence *(ʿAql-i ʿaql).*
The Universal Intelligence *(ʿAql-i ʿaql)* is your kernel,
your intellect is the husk:
The belly of animals is ever seeking husks.

Rūmī, Maśnavī III:2527; cf. MJR4 p.141

The qualities of a friend of God are greatly extolled in Sufi literature. His human conduct is impeccable:

> When Abū ʿAbd Allāh Sālimī was asked how the friend *(walī)* of God might be recognized amongst humanity, he said, "By the mildness of his speaking, the grace of his temperament, the youth of his face, his generosity, his contented character, his acceptance of all who seek to make amends, and his kindness towards all and sundry however virtuous or corrupt."
>
> *Anṣārī, Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah 225, TSAA p.258, in SSE6 p.53*

He is said to remember God constantly:

> The sign of the friend of God *(awliyā-yi Khudā)* is that his thought is God's thought, his peace of mind is with God, and his occupation is with God.
>
> *Maʿrūf Karkhī, in Tadhkirat al-Awliyā' I, TAN1 p.271, in SSE6 p.53*

He hopes that he will never be separated from God:

> The sign of the friend of God *(awliyā-yi Khudā)* is his fear of separation from God, due to the fact that his heart is utterly committed to God and filled with yearning for Him.
>
> *Muḥammad ibn ʿUliyān, in Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah, KTS p.436, in FNI6 p.68, in SSE6 p.53*

His teaching is founded upon his own mystical experience:

> Several masters have said, "The veracious friend of God *(walīy),* who is intimate with and enjoys the vision of God, is characterized by the

> fact that he or she calls people to God with righteous actions and the tongue of gnosis."
>
> *Rūzbihān, Mashrab al-Arwāḥ 9:50, MARB p.188; cf. in SSE11 p.101*

He desires nothing but God and to do God's will:

> God's friend *(walīy)* wants only what God wants, being shorn of any wishing, worthless lust, or will. Furthermore, this occurs while one's spirit discerns the forms of the Unseen. According to the *Qur'ān:* "And you will only do what God wills."[10]
>
> Al-ʿĀrif (al-Ḥallāj) said, "The friend's *(walīy)* willing is connected to God's all-willing."
>
> *Rūzbihān, Mashrab al-Arwāḥ 15:3, MARB p.256; cf. in SSE14 p.167*

> It is related that Ibrāhīm ibn Adham once asked a man, "Do you want to join the friends of God *(awliyā')?*"
>
> "Yes I do," replied the man.
>
> "Then," said Ibrāhīm, "crave nothing of the world or of the hereafter, adhere to God, abandon yourself in Him, and persist in pursuing Him until He accepts you and makes you a friend *(walīy)* of His."
>
> *Al-Qushayrī, Risālah, RQQQ p.129, in SSE6 p.52*

See also: **walāyat** (▸4).

1. *Qur'ān* 2:257; see also *Qur'ān* 2:107, 3:68, 7:196, 9:116, 71.
2. *Qur'ān* 5:54.
3. *Qur'ān* 4:125.
4. *2 Chronicles* 20:7; *Isaiah* 41:8; *Daniel* 3:35.
5. *E.g.* Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* XIV, *KMM* pp.269–70, *KM* p.214.
6. Hujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* XIV, *KMM* p.269, *KM* p.214.
7. Al-Qushayrī, Unsourced, in *MOI* p.130.
8. Sahl ibn ʿAbd Allāh, Unsourced, in *MOI* p.130.
9. *Qur'ān* 18:65–82.
10. *Qur'ān* 81:29.

wānanga (Mo) *Lit.* lore, learning, knowledge; tribal lore, ancestral knowledge, sacred knowledge; a recital or chant concerning the evolution of the universe and the history of man; occasionally, an instructor of the sacred wisdom, a sacred medium; hence, a sage, a wise person, an expert, a philosopher. See **initiation (Māori)** (7.4), **wānanga** (▸3).

waqt guru (H), **waqat guru** (Pu) *Lit.* master *(guru)* of the time *(waqt);* the living master. Masters themselves say that there is always at least one living master at any time, a *guru* who has come from God to lead souls back to Him, but that there can be more than one:

> Without a *guru* of the time *(waqt guru),* there can be no devotion,
> and without devotion, *sat lok* (true region) cannot be reached.
> I say this to he who has in him the current of yearning and true seeking;
> He who indulges in sensual pleasures,
> having worldly considerations uppermost in his mind,
> should not give up his faith in saints of the past,
> in gods, and in religion. . . .
> My teaching is not for him,
> for he has been shot by the arrows of worldly desire.
> Some are slaves to their families,
> some to wealth, and some seek name and fame. . . .
> Whoever is keen and desirous,
> for him have I sung of devotion to the *guru.*
> For as long as the *guru* of the time *(waqt guru)* has not been found,
> the work of the true seeker has not been accomplished.
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 8:1.44–52, SBP pp.73–74*

wayfarer See **progressive**.

wazīr (A/P) (pl. *wuzarā'*) *Lit.* vizier; from *wazara* (to carry a burden); a high government official, a government minister, a provincial governor, a close adviser, *etc.;* a title that has covered a number of such functions depending upon the administration and rulers of the time. Sufi literature contains many stories concerning viziers, good and bad, but only occasionally are they used as metaphors with a mystical meaning.

Rūmī is the main exception, sometimes assigning a symbolic significance to the role of the vizier. In *Fīhi mā Fīhi,* the vizier is the perfect master, the one through whom God (the King) may be approached:

> Seek the people of God *(Ḥaqq).* "Join with my servants, and enter my paradise."[1] God does not speak to everyone, just as the kings of this world do not speak to every weaver. They have appointed viziers *(wazīr)* and deputies to show the way to the king. So God has also chosen certain servants, so that whoever seeks God can find God through them. All the prophets have come for this sole reason – that they are the Way.
>
> *Rūmī, Fīhi mā Fīhi 65:15–19, KFF p.229; cf. DM pp.417–18, DRA p.237, SOU p.240*

In his *Dīvān,* the vizier is the spiritual form of the master, the "king" within:

Prostrate yourself to the image *(khayāl)*
of the king's face *(rūy)!*
For the image *(khayāl)* is vizier *(wazīr)* to the King, Reality.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 362:3889, KSD1 p.215, in SPL p.266

The spiritual reality of a perfect master is the divine creative power, the Universal Intelligence. This is the higher Reality where all aspects of his being converge into one.

In Rūmī's symbolism, the vizier is also the intellect who may guide the soul – for good or ill. In the *Maśnavī,* he relates a story concerning Moses and Pharaoh. Moses is the "Word of sweet voice" to whom Pharaoh (the soul) is attracted. But as soon as Pharaoh consults with his vizier (the intellect), all of Moses' good work is undone:

When a king listens to such a minister *(ṣāḥib),*
he disgraces the king and his kingdom unto everlasting. . . .
How many times did Pharaoh soften and become submissive
when listening to that Word *(Kalām)* from Moses!
That Word – such was the sweetness of that incomparable Word
that rock would have yielded milk.
But whenever he took counsel with Hāmān, his vizier *(wazīr),*
whose nature was hateful, then he (Hāmān) would say,
"Until now, you have been the ruler: will you be deceived
into becoming a slave of that wearer of rags?"

Those words would come like a stone
shot by a mangonel (military rock hurler),
striking upon his glass house.
All that that intermediary *(kalīm)* of sweet voice
had built up in a hundred days,
Hāmān would destroy in a single moment.

Your intellect *(ʿaql)* is the vizier *(wazīr)*
and is overcome by sensuality;
Within your being, it is like a brigand on the Way to God.
If a godly counsellor gives you good advice,
it will artfully put his words aside, saying,
"They are not well founded: take heed,
do not be carried away by them;
They are of no consequence,
come to your senses, do not be fooled."

Alas for the king whose vizier *(wazīr)* is like this:
the dwelling place for both of them is vengeful hell.
Happy the king whose helper in affairs is a vizier *(wazīr)* like Āṣaf.
When a just king associates with him,
the king's name is "light upon light".[2]
A king like Solomon and a vizier *(wazīr)* like Āṣaf
are "light upon light" and perfume upon perfume.

But when the king is like Pharaoh and his vizier *(wazīr)* like Hāmān,
then ill fortune is inevitable for them both.
Then it is "darkness upon darkness":[3]
Neither intellect nor fortune shall befriend them
on the Day of Judgment.
I have never seen anything but misery in the degenerate:
If you have ever seen anything else,
convey my salaams to them!

Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:1239–55; cf. MJR4 pp.340–41

The soul *(jān),* Rūmī continues, is the king, and the intellect *(ʿaql)* is the vizier *(wazīr).*[4] But a corrupt vizier will be the downfall of the king. So, he counsels, take the Universal Intelligence *(ʿAql-i Kull)* as your vizier, not the individual intellect *(ʿaql-i juzvī):*

The king is as the spirit *(jān)*
and the vizier *(wazīr)* as the intellect *(ʿaql):*
The debased intellect *(ʿaql-i fāsid)*
causes the downfall of the spirit *(rūḥ).*...

Do not take the individual intellect *(ʿaql-i juzvī)*
as your vizier *(wazīr):*
Make the Universal Intelligence *(ʿAql-i Kull)* your vizier *(wazīr),* O king.
Do not make sensuality your vizier *(wazīr),*
else your pure spirit *(jān-i pāk)* will cease from prayer.
For this sensuality is full of greed,
and sees only the immediate present,
whereas the (higher) Intelligence *(ʿAql)*
takes the Day of Judgment into account.
The eyes of the (Universal) Intelligence
are on the end of things:
It endures the pain of the thorn for the sake of that rose
which does not fade and drop in autumn –
Far from it is the breath of every nose that cannot smell!

Rūmī, Maśnavī IV:1256, 1258–62; cf. MJR4 pp.341–42

The best vizier for the kingly soul, concludes Rūmī, is the Universal Intelligence of God. Nāṣir-i Khusraw is similarly direct:

> The milk of time soon fills the belly –
> haven't you drunk enough yet?
> Get a grip on yourself!
> Hire Wisdom *(Khirad)* as your vizier *(wazīr)*.
> Meditate!
>
> *Nāṣir-i Khusraw, Dīvān, DNKR p.157; cf. in NKD p.93*

Rūmī tells other stories featuring viziers. Perhaps the most well known is that of a Jewish king who, in his hatred of the Christians, fails to see the accord between the teachings of Moses and Jesus.[5] His crafty vizier – so cunning he can "tie knots in water"[6] and so mean he puts "garlic in the almond cake"[7] – therefore devises a plot to spread chaos among the Christians. First, he gains the confidence of the Christians, inveigling himself into the position of their leader. Then he begins to spread discord among them by teaching conflicting doctrines to different groups. Finally, he appoints twelve separate successors, each believing himself the sole successor. He then commits suicide. The Christians are thus left to squabble among themselves, destroying the integrity of the original unified community of disciples left by Jesus, and the original teachings of Jesus are lost.

The vizier, identified symbolically by Rūmī as the Antichrist, can again be understood as the human intellect, spreading discord and dissention wherever it goes, and distorting the teachings of the mystics. According to Rūmī, however, not all the Christians were deceived:

> Whoever possessed spiritual discernment
> felt a sweet savour in his (the vizier's) words,
> but joined with bitterness.
> He was saying fine things mixed with foul:
> he had poured some poison into the sugared julep.
> The outward sense of it was saying, "Be diligent in the Way,"
> but in effect it was saying to the soul, "Be slack."
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:446–48; cf. MJR2 p.27*

Rūmī is indicating that it is far easier to devote time and energy to outward ceremonies, ritual prayer and good works than it is to spend time in silent and solitary meditation.

See also: ʿ**Aql al-Kullī** (3.1), ʿ**aql** (5.1).

1. *Qurʾān* 89:29–30.

2. *Qur'ān* 24:35.
3. *Qur'ān* 24:40.
4. See also Rūmī, *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz* 840:8797–99, *KSD2* p.170, in *SPL* p.41.
5. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:324*ff., MJR2* p.21*ff.*
6. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:338; *cf. MJR2* p.21.
7. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:445, *MJR2* p.27.

Word incarnate, **Word made flesh** See **incarnation**.

wū (C) *Lit.* a witch, a wizard; a shaman; one who attains various powers through trance or ecstatic experiences; regarded by some scholars as the precursor to the *fāngshì* (alchemist, healer, magician).

A *wū* is someone who is adept at using magic for the purpose of controlling events, divining the hidden, and curing the sick; who can communicate with plants, minerals, animals, and the other worlds; and is believed to be capable of escorting the souls of the dead to the other world. In earlier times, the activities of a *wū* included:[1]

1. Inviting spirits to visit the mortal realm temporarily, which differs from the possession of a medium by a spirit. When 'inviting spirits', the *wū* dances in order to raise his (or her) consciousness into a trance-like higher state. This permits access to the spirit, rather than allowing it to enter and possess the body.

2. Interpreting dreams, which were understood to convey messages and omens. The ceremony of summoning the soul of the dead was conducted by a *wū* known as 'the dream master'. The *wū*'s lucid dreams were journeys to other realms where he remained in control.

3. Reading omens, as a means of predicting the course of events. This included being adept at using the *Yìjīng (I-Ching),* an ancient divination text that uses seemingly random numbers to generate a hexagram, which is linked with a unique, often enigmatic, reading, from which guidance can be construed.

4. Rainmaking, which involved dancing and singing – a ceremony that is still performed by Daoist priests in present times.

5. Healing, by driving out malevolent spirits that have invaded the body.

6. Celestial divination to promote harmony with the will of heaven and to create peace and prosperity on earth. The *wū* were employed to observe the skies and interpret celestial events.

In divining the future, a *wū* of ancient times might have heated a cow's scapula or a turtle's shell, from an examination of which they would read whether or not a particular day would be auspicious for some event, or whether the outcome would be favourable. Frequently, the *wū* was assisted by various 'animal helpers' whose significance has become apparent from images depicted on bronze ritual vessels and other items recovered during archaeological excavations.

The general population sought out a *wū* to assist with prophecy, fortune-telling, exorcism, healing, rainmaking, and dream interpretation. The 'greatness' of a *wū* was judged by what he or she appeared to know of hidden secrets, such as the properties of medicinal plants, techniques for communicating with animals and people, methods of healing the sick and dying, and the ability to prophesy and protect people.

Often, a *wū* was also a spirit medium; and their effectiveness as such – including their ability to journey to other levels of existence – also determined the respect and popularity accorded them.

Shamanism in China was not solely a masculine domain. Women also played an important role in its development. A female *wū* used chanting, dancing and spirit-writing, and is sometimes depicted riding the phoenix bird *(luán),* whereas a male *wū* is depicted riding dragons *(lóng)* and cranes *(hè).*

It is believed that a *wū* was capable of connecting directly to many unseen aspects of the physical world, as well as beyond into other worlds. The *wū* is believed to have been capable of transcending the limitations of the worldly plane by altering his or her conscious state, something that was achieved with the use of trance-inducing dances and rituals, as well as the use of herbal concoctions. Present-day Daoist practitioner and author Eva Wong points out the similarity between mysticism *(shénmì zhǔyì)* and shamanism *(sàmǎnjiào):*

> Each involves an ecstatic experience, transformed perception, feats of power, and a union with a force that takes the individual to a more complete existence than the mundane self.
>
> *Eva Wong, Taoism, TEG p.45*

One of the earliest manuscripts to mention the *wū* is the *Chǔcí* ('Songs of the South'). Several of these songs include poetic descriptions of journeys made by the *wū* to inner realms and of the distant places they visited, as well as visits made to the *wū* by celestial deities.

The practices of the *wū* were similar to those of the *wūshī* (sorcerer, wizard, magician), and the two terms are closely related and frequently

interchanged. However, the stories of inner and outer journeys made in the company of celestial beings are more frequent among the *wū* than the *wūshī*. Likewise, although the terms *wū* and *fāngshì* (alchemist, healer, magician) are often used interchangeably, contact with deities is more frequently found in stories of the *wū*.

Over time, the more spiritual and mystical aspects of the *wū*'s role merged into ruler and then into sage. In the mystical tradition, the unified ruler-shaman-sage became the 'perfected one', who could not only rule on earth but could also journey within, like the *wū* of old.

Fables about the *wū* abound, sometimes depicting them favourably, sometimes unfavourably. The *Zhuāngzǐ* includes a story about Daoist master Lièzǐ (*fl.c.*400 BCE) in which Lièzǐ, as a novice, doubts his own master Húzǐ. In this story, Jì Xián is a *wū* who is reputed to be able to use his powers as a spirit medium to predict people's health and prosperity, and their life and death, with great accuracy. The people of Zhèng fear him, and Lièzǐ starts to think that Jì Xián is more powerful than his own master. His master Húzǐ dismisses this notion and tells his disciple that the medium is simply skilled at reading faces. To prove this, Húzǐ challenges Lièzǐ to bring the *wū* to see him.

On the first visit, Húzǐ shows Jì Xián his earthly appearance, and the *wū* later tells Lièzǐ that his master is dying. Devastated, Lièzǐ reports this to Húzǐ, who tells him to bring the *wū* back. This time Húzǐ shows Jì Xián his "heavenly field", and later the *wū* tells Lièzǐ that he sees a vibrant man who is far from death. Lièzǐ again reports this to Húzǐ, who instructs Lièzǐ to bring the *wū* a third time. On this occasion, Húzǐ shows Jì Xián the "great unconquerable liquid centring" with his *qì* (life-force energy) in balance. At this, the *wū* tells Lièzǐ that he can read nothing. On hearing this, Húzǐ tells Lièzǐ to bring him yet again:

> At dawn the next day, they returned. The shaman *(wū)* shuffled around, then completely lost control and ran off.
>
> "Follow him now, if you still want to," Húzǐ instructed.
>
> Lièzǐ followed, but could not catch up with him. Eventually he returned and reported to Húzǐ, "He's gone. I couldn't catch up, and now I've lost him."
>
> "This time," Húzǐ said, "I showed him my ancestral teacher before it (creation) began. I showed him emptiness, wriggling like a snake. He didn't know who or what I was as I bowed and wavered, billowed and flowed. So he and his fortune-telling fled."
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 7; cf. CTSS pp.55–57*

In the end, the *wū* runs away in fear because Húzǐ had shown him his real nature. Lièzǐ spends the rest of his life in simplicity, remorseful that, as Húzǐ's disciple, he had ever doubted his master and had not understood his depth.

It is said that a *wū* receives initiation on two different levels. One is a supernatural initiation in a dream or vision of the spirit world, frequently including a mystical experience of a higher aspect of themselves. The other is a human initiation, whereby the mores, the techniques and the legends of their tradition are received from an older, more experienced *wū.* Together, these two initiations enable the *wū* to go beyond his physical self and his physical experiences into otherworldly realms.[2]

See also: **fāngshì**, **wūshī**.

1. See Eva Wong, *Taoism, TEG* pp.14–16.
2. See Livia Kohn, *Early Chinese Mysticism, ECMK,* pp.81–82.

wǔdì (C) *Lit.* the Five Emperors. See **sānhuáng wǔdì**.

wūshī (C) *Lit.* a sorcerer, a wizard, a magician. The activities of a *wūshī* included: various forms of protection, such as fending off disasters; exorcism of malevolent spirits; divination, blessing, and healing; and travel to other worlds as a means of providing deities, spirits and the dead with a way of contacting this world. Their practices were similar to those of the *wū* (shaman), the two terms being closely related and frequently interchanged.

The way of the *wūshī* included an understanding that the world comprises not only its physical elements (wind, rain, thunder, lightning, animals, plants, rocks, *etc.*), but also spirits and deities, and that all of these have powers within them. Using certain methods, these powers could be summoned, manipulated and channelled, and used by the *wūshī,* for instance, in rainmaking.

The extent to which a *wūshī* was able to summon, control, and dismiss these powers, and the extent of his control over the elements, determined the *wūshī*'s standing, and thus the degree of personal power he or she had in the community or area.

There were several ways the *wūshī* could acquire, share, or use powers from spirits and deities, some of which were safer than others. Even objects could be endowed with the powers of a deity or spirit:

> Mirrors, bells, swords, gourds, fans, umbrellas and lanterns are the best carriers of power. Some objects, like talismans (containing magical formulae) and amulets, embody power in themselves, because of the presence of the magical script; however, the magic needs to be activated by the appropriate methods.
>
> *Eva Wong, Taoism, TEG p.101*

The power received from a deity or spirit could be positive or negative, and its control was understood to be difficult, since such powers take on the personality of the deity or spirit, or may have a will of their own.

See also: **fāngshì**, **wū**.

xián (C) *Lit.* worthy or virtuous person. See **shèng**.

xiān, **xiānrén**, **shénxiān** (C) *Lit.* a celestial being, an immortal *(xiān);* an immortal *(xiān)* person *(rén);* a spiritual *(shén)* immortal *(xiān);* one who has transcended the physical by rising to the spiritual; a *Dào*-realized person who is no longer concerned with physical death; someone whose spirit *(shén)* is free from the restrictions of a physical body; a spiritually enlightened person; also (spiritual) immortality through attainment of the *Dào.*

The original Chinese character for *xiān* was an ideogram that signified rising or ascending into the air. The present character – a pictogram aggregating the signs for man and mountain – was a later introduction, after the *xiān* had come to be associated with seeking the seclusion of mountainous areas.

Attaining the level of a *xiān* results from intensive spiritual practice, performing physical exercises and adopting dietary regimes designed to maintain the health and strength of the physical body – thereby supporting the primary activity, which is spiritual practice. With spiritual immortality comes mental ease, as well as generally enhanced or preserved physical health:

> As a youth, Yùzǐ was fond of studying the classics, and King Yōu of the Zhōu dynasty gave him an official post.
>
> He did not take it up, however, but exclaimed with a sigh: "We, who are born into this world, let the days of our life slip away one by one, death looming ever nearer as the day of our birth recedes further into the past. Yet all we crave is wealth and honour *(fùguì),* with no idea how to nourish the stream of life itself (*yǎngxìng,* spiritual cultivation). As soon as our allotted span is exhausted and our breath fails, we die. Then, when we are merely dust and ashes *(huītǔ),* how shall we benefit from the rank of prince or marquis, or by stores of gold and jade piled mountain-high? Only by becoming a *shénxiān* (spiritual immortal) can one hope to avoid dissolution."
>
> Accordingly, he (Yùzǐ) became the disciple of Chángsāngzǐ, who initiated him into all his arts (*shù,* method, technique).... In the end, he climbed to the summit of Mount Kōngtóng and rose up to heaven *(shēngtiān)* in broad daylight *(báirì).*
>
> *Gě Hóng, Shénxiān zhuàn; cf. GCI pp.21–22*

Mount Kōngtóng, in present-day Gansu Province, is one of the sacred mountains of Daoism.

A cultivator of *Dào* works hard to overcome the gross, habitual tendencies of bodily existence. As spiritual practice progresses, his subtle spiritual body is gradually awakened. The physical body (the *yīn* aspect of the self) yields place to a body of light (the *yáng* aspect) of a far higher vibration. With this realization of his spiritual oneness with *Dào,* the cultivator becomes a *xiān,* his physical body no longer an impediment or restraint. Now a *xiān,* he can enter spiritual dimensions and return to the physical level at will:

> Once immortality is perfected *(chéngxiān),* appearing and disappearing from the common world will merely be a free passage of numinosity (*líng,* spirit) throughout these transformations *(biàn).* This, then, is what we call 'going beyond the world'.
>
> *Sūn Sīmiǎo, Cúnshén liànqì míng; cf. SSTK p.120*

The spirit *(shén)* breaks free from and transcends, first the physical then the mental body. Having recovered its power and control over the body and mind, the spirit is liberated from bondage to the physical and the mental, becoming free to "coolly cross the ocean" of existence:

> One day immortal *(xiān)* and mortal *(fán)* are separated,
> and you coolly cross the ocean.
>
> *'Chōngjǔ,' in Sūn Bù'èr yuánjūn fǎyǔ, ISC p.45*

Some Daoists believe that the body as well as the mind has to be properly trained. In their view, it is insufficient to master only methods of meditation; mastery of the body and its *qì* (life-force energy) is equally essential. Mastery of mental methods alone, they say, produces a feeble *yīn* spirit, whereas mastery also of the body (stillness *etc.*) and its energies *(qì) (i.e.* attachments, desires, inclinations, *etc.)* produces a powerful *yángshén* (radiant spirit). The full power of this immortal *yángshén* and its ultimate liberation are achieved through proper spiritual practice:

> Why do people who study (the way to immortality)…not understand that pure *yáng qì* is born after the essence *(jīng)* is refined and made into an elixir *(dān).* After you refine the *qì* and complete the spirit *(shén),* the realized numinous divine immortal *(zhēnlíng shénxiān)* transcends the ordinary and enters into sacredness. You abandon your shell *(qì qiào)* and ascend to immortality *(xiān),* and this is called 'transcending and escaping *(chāotuō)*'. This is the method of divine immortals *(shénxiān)* that has not changed for a hundred million years!
>
> *Anonymous Commentary, Dàdān zhízhǐ 2:8b–9a, TPEQ pp.93–94*

Differing gradations of *xiān* have been recognized by the various schools of Daoist thought. According to the *Zhōng Lǚ chuándào jí* (*c.*C10th CE), there are five categories of *xiān.* In a section 'On True Immortality', Daoist immortal Zhōnglí Quán is quoted as saying that "immortality is not of one kind only":

> There are five degrees of immortals: namely, the demon immortals *(guǐxiān),* the human immortals *(rénxiān),* the earthly immortals *(dìxiān),* the spirit immortals *(shénxiān),* and the celestial immortals *(tiānxiān).*
>
> *Zhōnglí Quán, Zhōng Lǚ chuándào jí, in ARRV p.28*

Eleventh-century Daoist master Zhāng Bóduān, from the same school as Zhōnglí Quán, goes further and says that celestial immortality *(tiānxiān)* is the highest degree of spiritual realization, and should therefore be the aim of students of immortality. The meaning is expressed symbolically:

> If you are going to study immortality *(xiān),* you should study celestial immortality *(tiānxiān);* only the gold elixir *(jīndān)* is worthwhile. When the two things join, sense *(qíng)* and essence *(xìng)* merge; when the five elements *(wǔxíng)* are complete, the tiger *(hǔ)* and dragon *(lóng)* intertwine. Starting with heaven-earth and earth-earth as go-betweens, finally . . . husband and wife conjoin happily. Just wait for the achievement to be completed to pay court to the north palace gate; in the light *(guāng)* of ninefold mist you ride a flying phoenix *(luán).*
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, URC p.28*

"The two things join," "the tiger and dragon intertwine," and "husband and wife conjoin" all refer to harmonizing the *yīn* and *yáng* aspects of the individual. On completion of this process, the successful adept attains spiritual immortality, metaphorically represented by riding a phoenix to the highest heaven.

Zhāng Bóduān makes the point, though, that spirituality generally, and meditation specifically, cannot be learned from books. It is essential to be able to communicate with and to ask questions of a living teacher, otherwise one may fail to "penetrate the arcana" in the pursuit of spiritual immortality. Because a *shénxiān* has already attained the *Dào,* he is therefore best placed to teach those who aspire to understand It and wish to become It:

> Treatises, classics and song expound ultimate Reality *(zhìzhēn),* but do not express the firing process (spiritual practice) clearly in writing. If you want to know the orally transmitted teachings (*jué,* secrets) and

> penetrate the arcana, this requires careful discussion with the spiritual immortals *(shénxiān).*
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, URC p.86*

There are two Daoist understandings of immortality: first, the indefinite continuation of the physical body; and second, the realization of the eternal nature of the spirit *(shén).* Daoist scriptures and other writings are not always clear about where one ends and the other begins, because some Daoist philosophers have created ambiguity. This may be partly because much of the symbolic language of *wàidān* (outer physical alchemy) has been used by practitioners of *nèidān* (inner spiritual alchemy) to describe the inner transformation of spiritual consciousness or awareness.

A twentieth-century writer on Daoism, John Blofeld (1913–1987), describes the Daoist *xiān* in terms of spiritual or mystical Daoism:

> An immortal is one who, by employing to the full all his endowments of body and mind, by shedding passion and eradicating all but the simplest and most harmless desires, has attained to free, spontaneous existence – a being so nearly perfect that his body is but a husk or receptacle of pure spirit. He has undergone a spiritual rebirth, broken free from the shackles of illusory selfhood, and come face to face with his 'true self,' aware that it is not his personal possession, being no other than the sublime undifferentiated *Dào.* With the vanishing of his seeming ego, he sees himself no longer as an individual, but as the unchanging *Dào* embodied in a transient cloud-like form. Death, when it comes, will be for him no more than the casting off of a worn-out robe.
>
> *John Blofeld, Taoism, TRI p.16*

By contrast, the view of philosopher and writer Alan Watts (1915–1973), a contemporary of Blofeld, is that the interpretation of *xiān* encompasses only the quest for physical immortality and supernatural powers, primarily using physical alchemical practices *(wàidān).* He therefore differentiates between '*xiān* Daoism' and 'contemplative Daoism':

> A *xiān* is an immortal – one who has purified his flesh from decay by special forms of breathing, diet, drugs (herbs), and exercises.
>
> *Alan Watts, Tao, TWW p.xxv*

A sixth-century Daoist scripture, attributing its words to Lǎozǐ, scorns the notion of physical immortality, referring people instead to the wisdom of seeking spiritual immortality:

> Observe the past; look at the present: who could ever keep his body whole? Even I have white hair, growing weaker as I ripen in years.

> Thus I cast off the ordinary, reject and leave the common world, embrace the primordial source *(yuán)* and guard the One *(yī),* go beyond all – and attain spirit immortality *(shénxiān).*
>
> *Xīshēng jīng 2.10a–b, TMPS p.239*

The anonymous writer of a tenth-century Daoist scripture concerning the 'Great Mystery' also affirms the superiority of spiritual immortality over physical immortality; yet he also points to the physical benefits that may ensue from spiritual transformation, which do have the potential to extend the adept's life beyond 'normal' years:

> The key to becoming an immortal *(xiān)* lies in the transformation *(liàn)* of the spirit *(shén).* The ability to fly, run and climb effortlessly comes from possessing a spirit body *(shén tǐ).* When muscles and tendons are strong and the breath is deep, the body will become light and agile, and the spirit body will glow with radiance. If you want to have strong muscles and tendons, you must still the mind and nourish the blood.… If you want to develop endurance, you will need to conserve generative energy *(jīng qì).* If you want the body to become light and agile, you should practise the methods of cultivating the generative *(jīng),* vital *(qì),* and spirit *(shén)* energies.
>
> *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn 2:3.3, NEL pp.101–2*

In one of her poems, Daoist adept Cuī Shàoxuán (795–817) makes it clear that immortality is not just given; one has to work for it – suggesting that only through intense spiritual practice can one attain the *Dào,* the "Primal One", the "Great Nonbeing":

> Attainment of the Primal One *(yīyuán)*
> is not a gift from heaven.
> Realization of the Great Nonbeing *(tàiwú)*
> is the state of highest immortality *(wúshàng zhī xiān).*
>
> *Cuī Shàoxuán, Shǒuyī shī, in Xuánzhū xīnjìng zhù; cf. TMLT p.133*

Similarly, in a question-and-answer *(wèndá)* session, thirteenth-century Daoist master Lǐ Dàochún tells a disciple that from time immemorial those who have mastered immortality have done so "by way of this *Dào*". Both their spiritual practice and their spiritual experiences have been their personal proof of this:

> All of the superior immortals *(xiān)* since antiquity have realized mastery by way of this *Dào;* their practice (*xiū,* cultivation) and experience (*zhèng,* personal proof) have always been based on this.
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, BBH p.45*

That a life lived in proper pursuit of oneness with the *Dào* can ultimately lead to spiritual immortality is confirmed by the anonymous writer of a *Táng* dynasty (618–907) scripture concerning 'inner observation':

> Only when life and the *Dào* are combined in harmony, will there be long life and no death *(chángshēng bùsǐ).* Undergoing the transformation of wings *(yǔhuà)* one will then become a spirit immortal *(xiān).*
>
> *Nèiguān jīng 4b; cf. TMLT p.214*

The term *yǔhuà* – literally, turn into *(huà)* wings *(yǔ),* hence, sprout wings – which metaphorically describes the process of becoming an immortal *(xiān),* has an ancient origin. It was used at least as far back as the *Lièxiān zhuàn* (*c.*C14th), a compilation of the biographies of various *xiān.* In this connection, it is interesting to note that one of the synonyms for *xiān* is *yǔrén* – feather *(yǔ)* person *(rén)* – another allusion to the spiritual flight *(fēi)* of a *xiān.*

Some sources say that there are two basic ways to become a *xiān.* One depends upon the practitioner's hard work to cultivate and ingest the 'elixir of immortality' (*i.e.* carry out spiritual practices), and thus become transformed into a *xiān.* The other is through the direct transmission of the elixir from a *xiān* to a deserving mortal, who is then immediately transformed into a *xiān.*

According to Daoist scholar Livia Kohn, in the language of Daoist mythology, the *xiān* is said to transcend the physical and dwell in the realm of 'ten continents and two paradises'. The 'two paradises' are mentioned as early as the third century BCE. They comprise three mountains or islands (including Pénglái) in the Bóhǎi Sea (Bó Hǎi) off China's east coast and the mountains of Kūnlún in the Western Highlands of China. Use of the term 'ten continents' was introduced several hundred years later.[1] The 'ten continents and two paradises' refer metaphorically to the heavenly realms.

According to a version of the *Huàhú jīng* by present-day Daoist master Ni Hua-Ching, which he claims was handed down orally through many generations of his family, Lǎozǐ describes to a seeker the characteristics of a *xiān:*

> "Kind and selfless beings lead a life attuned to the universal Way. With whole virtue, they eliminate the artificial boundaries between societies and the illusionary boundary between life and death. In this way, they become immortal."
>
> "Venerable Teacher, do all immortal divine beings have insight?"
>
> "Kind prince, it is not a question of whether they have insight into one particular thing or not, but whether a being has cultivated and developed the vision of wholeness before realizing an integral life of immortality. If a person learns only the technique of gathering

> energy in order to become immortal, but does not develop his entire being and complete vision, then his cultivation depends entirely on the information he is able to gather. . . .
>
> "There can be no complete development for those who do not lead a complete life. A complete life is the foundation for the attainment of immortality."
>
> *Ni Hua-Ching, Huàhú jīng, CWLT (36) p.143*

There are many legends about those who pursued union with *Dào,* progressing through the various stages of perfection until eventually they were transformed into *xiān.* The best-known examples are the legendary *bāxiān* (eight immortals), comprising seven men and one woman, Hé Xiāngū ('Immortal Woman Hé', *d.c.*707).

Two popular folk stories are told of how Hé Xiāngū became a *xiān.* In the first, a spirit appears to her when she is fourteen and tells her to grind a particular stone to powder and eat it. This 'mother of clouds' powder makes her light, and she attains immortality. Because she follows these instructions, also vowing not to marry, she acquires the power to fly from one mountain peak to another gathering fruit for her mother, since she herself no longer needs food. Desiring to obtain the secrets of immortality, the empress Wǔ summons Hé Xiāngū to the imperial palace. Versions of the story relate that Hé Xiāngū became a *xiān* while on the way to see the Empress and disappeared before reaching the palace, although someone did catch sight of her floating on a cloud fifty years later.

In the second story, Hé Xiāngū gets lost in the mountains, where she is living as a hermit. During her wanderings, she encounters Daoist immortal Lǚ Dòngbīn (*b.c.*796), who gives her a peach (*táo,* a symbol of immortality) to eat. This takes away her hunger forever, and she becomes a *xiān.* She carries a lotus flower or seed pod as her trademark, and her followers ask her questions regarding their future destiny.

The incessant, diligent spiritual practice required to become a *xiān* is a common theme in Daoist literature. An eighteenth-century text says that if a practitioner has perfect concentration even for a brief moment, it is possible to experience a realized state; yet, if a practitioner misses even one day of spiritual practice, for that day he will feel unfulfilled ('ghostlike'):

> You should each practise diligently *(lìxíng);* it would be too bad if you wasted time. If you do not practise *(xíng)* for a day, then you are a ghost *(guǐ)* for a day; if you do practise *(xíng)* for a single breath, then you are a realized *(zhēn)* immortal *(xiān)* for a breath. Work on this! Work on this!
>
> *Jīnhuá zōngzhǐ 13, SGFC p.64*

In a sixth-century (CE) set of precepts derived from the teachings of Lǎozǐ, after Daoist practitioners have received the correct instructions, they are urged to diligently pursue a focused quest for *shénxiān* (spiritual immortality) through various practices, including recitation and study:

> Lord Lǎo said: "Male and female disciples of pure faith, be they householders *(zàijiā)* or recluses *(chūjiā),* once they have received the scripture and the divine ways, shall vow to take delight only in spiritual immortality *(shénxiān).* Day and night they recite *(sòng)* and study *(dú),* ever pursuing the wondrous meaning (of *Dào*)."
>
> *Lǎojūn jièjīng 23b, CCED p.152*

Mystics have described the material world in many different ways. Eleventh-century Daoist master Zhāng Bóduān waxes lyrical with phrases like "the burning house of impermanence", which nevertheless no longer limits or restrains the *xiān* from spiritual flight into the heavenly realms. He describes this inner travelling using the common Daoist metaphor of "riding a phoenix-drawn chariot":

> Cultivating over eight hundred virtuous practices, accumulating a full three thousand hidden deeds, equally saving self and others, friend and foe, only then do you accord with the original vow *(yuán)* of spiritual immortals *(shénxiān).* Then tigers and rhinos, swords and soldiers, do not injure you, the burning house of impermanence cannot constrain you; after the precious *(bǎo)* descends, you go and pay court to heaven, calmly riding a phoenix-drawn chariot.
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, URC p.146*

See also: **bāxiān**, **fēishēng** (▸3).

1. See Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Experience, TEAK* pp.48–49.

yad Allāh, **yadullāhi** (A), **dast-i Allāh**, **dast-i Ḥaqq**, **dast-i Khudā** (P) *Lit.* hand *(yad, dast)* of God *(Allāh, Ḥaqq, Khudā);* an expression implying that everything is in God's 'hands', that everything happens according to the divine will; specifically, the divine creative power and the perfect saint or perfect man, whose inner reality is that of the divine power; also as *Yamīn Allāh* (Right Hand of God), *yamīn* meaning 'right'.

It is through the hand that wishes are accomplished. So, metaphorically, it is through the Hand of God that the divine will is manifest in creation. It is also by the hand that gifts are bestowed. In the case of a saint, his primary

gift is the "Pearl" of true spirituality – the divine Word. Rūmī addresses the saint:

> Henceforth, give from the wage that is not grudged:[1]
> give the hidden Pearl to everyone who desires it.
> Go, be the meaning of
> "the Hand of God *(Yad Allāh)* is above their hands":
> Like the Hand of God *(Dast-i Ḥaqq),*
> scatter the daily bread *(rizq)* recklessly.
> Release those in debt from their irresponsibility:
> like rain, make the carpet of the world green.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī V:2794–96; cf. MJR6 p.168*

Rūmī is quoting from the *Qur'ān,* where God addresses Muḥammad:

> Those who swear allegiance to you swear allegiance to God Himself. The Hand of God *(Yadullāhi)* is above their hands. Whoever breaks his oath, harms his own soul, but whoever keeps his covenant with God, on him will He bestow a rich reward.
>
> *Qur'ān 48:10; cf. AYA, KPA, MGK*

Speaking of the *pīr* (master) as the "Hand of God", Rūmī also refers to the Quranic story of the legendary saint Khiżr, who kills a child, much to the consternation of his companion Moses.[2] In explaining his action, Khiżr reveals that it was ultimately beneficial, for the child would have grown up into a criminal character who would have distracted his parents from their devotion to God:

> God has declared that his hand is as His own, since He declared
> "the Hand of God *(Yad Allāh)* is above their hands."
> The Hand of God *(Dast-i Ḥaqq)* causes the child to die
> and brings him back to life.
> To life? He makes him an everlasting spirit.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:2972–73; cf. MJR2 p.162*

Elsewhere, Rūmī adds:

> If one who bestows spiritual life should slay,
> it is permissible.
> He is the divine vicegerent,
> and his hand is the Hand of God *(Dast-i Khudā).*
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:226; cf. MJR2 p.16*

And:

> Since that upright one (*kāmil,* perfect one) is accepted by God,
> his hand in all things is the Hand of God *(Dast-i Khudā).*
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:1610; cf. MJR1 p.89*

Although neither the *Qur'ān* nor the *ḥadīth* refer to Muḥammad as the "Hand of God", Rūmī commonly refers to Muḥammad as a saint, and also as the "Hand of God".[3]

The eleventh-century Persian poet Nāṣir-i Khusraw also refers to the saint as the "Hand of God". Here, Wisdom is the Creative Word:

> Wake up! It is time to arise from the couch of sloth, my son,
> and look upon the world with the eye of Wisdom *(chashm-i Khirad).*
> Eating and sleeping is the work of a creature with whom
> you, my ignoramus, cannot hope to compare: the ass!
> Why do you suppose God gave you a brain?
> For eating and snoring contests with donkeys?
> Tie around your fat head the turban of Wisdom *(kulāh-i Khirad),*
> then one night raise your eyes to the azure vault of heaven,
> like the surging waves of an emerald sea. . . .
>
> Seize the Hand of God *(Dast-i Khudā)* or you'll regret it!
> Find a new-minted ear,
> a fresh eye to gaze upon this great Sovereign –
> For he will not grant you audience
> unless you cut off your ears
> and pluck your eyes from the webs of this world.
>
> Your Lord summons you to the heights –
> why have you cast yourself into the pit?
> Climb to highest heaven on feet of gnosis and wings of devotion.
>
> *Nāṣir-i Khusraw, Dīvān, DNKR pp.146–47; cf. in NKD pp.43–44*

See also: **Hand of God** (3.1), **Khiżr**, **pīr**.

1. *Cf. Qur'ān* 84:25.
2. *Qur'ān* 18:65–81.
3. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* V:122, *MJR6* p.10.

yamabushi (J) *Lit.* mountain *(yama)* warrior *(bushi);* a Japanese mountain ascetic or mountain monk; a practitioner of *Shugendō,* an esoteric and ascetic path

based on folk beliefs that later incorporated elements of *Shintō,* Daoism, and Buddhism. *Shugendō* (path of training and testing) practitioners are also called *shugenja, shugyō sha, kenja,* and *kenza.*

It is probable that the early *yamabushi* were independent, somewhat akin to the *hijiri* (wandering holy men), only later developing ties with the *Shingon* and *Tendai* traditions, the most esoteric of the Japanese Buddhist schools. The origins of *Shugendō* lie in *kannabi shinkō,* the belief that the mountains are a sacred place, the dwelling of ancestors and gods. *Shugendō* itself, as a loosely organized religious and spiritual practice, arose when this form of asceticism came under the influence of Buddhism and Chinese mysticism during the Heian period (794–1184). Thus, together with its core sacred-mountain worship, asceticism, and shamanism, *Shugendō* combined various elements from Daoism, Shintō, and esoteric Buddhism. The goal seems to have been a fusion of the quest for spiritual enlightenment with the additional desire to develop supernatural and healing powers. The increasingly organized and politicized, monastic Buddhism of the Heian period is also thought to have invoked a response among some monks for a life of solitude and asceticism in the wilderness of the mountains.

Shugendō is generally said to have been founded by the late-seventh-century mountain ascetic En no Gyōja (En the Ascetic), although his life has been mythologized to the extent that it is difficult to separate fact from fiction. En no Gyōja, also called En no Ozunu, is said to have scaled and consecrated many of the mountain peaks, laying the foundation of future pilgrimage routes travelled by the *yamabushi.* He is also said to have founded the monastery on Mount Ōmine as the headquarters of *Shugendō,* which continues to the present day. The first official records of the *yamabushi* or *shugenja* date from the eleventh century, by which time it appears to have become prevalent throughout Japan, being represented even in the imperial court, where the *yamabushi* played the part of advisers, healers, soothsayers, and sorcerers.

Following *Shugendō* practice, many *yamabushi* practised extreme austerities including a solitary life in mountain caves; long fasts from both food and water, often combined with continuous chanting of the scriptures or magical incantations; arduous mountain journeys from peak to peak interpreted as pilgrimages through sacred landscapes; sitting in the snow or under cold mountain waterfalls; hanging from cliffs in order to 'weigh' their sins; performing rites such as fire ceremonies; and meditation. Their standard equipment included a conch-shell trumpet *(horagi)* attached to their belt for communication in the dark or in the thick mountain cloud and mist, and a *bonkyō,* a book of *sūtras* (scriptures, traditionally in Sanskrit) with wooden covers, which they carried on their back.

The mountains and mountain pilgrimage paths were understood to be symbolically and geographically linked to esoteric Buddhist rituals that use *maṇḍalas* as meditational objects, often dedicated to particular deities,

and iconographically representing various aspects of the Buddha's wisdom. Particular mountain ranges, for example, would be understood as the objectivized form of particular *maṇḍalas.* The peaks and various other topographical features, such as boulders, springs, waterfalls, and so on, were regarded as the abode of the deities symbolized in the *maṇḍalas.* The *yamabushi* would travel the mountain paths as though they were travelling through the symbols of the *maṇḍala.* Various rites, *mantras* (incantations) and *mudrās* (esoteric hand gestures) were performed on the peaks and at other significant locations, where the *yamabushi* would leave signs of stone or wood to mark the way and indicate their passing. They would undertake one such pilgrimage in the spring and another in the autumn, such pilgrimages lasting many weeks. The summer was occupied with a retreat on the mountain that represented the centre of the *maṇḍala.* The rites and austerities of the *yamabushi* were considered efficacious for developing the spiritual power and insight necessary for divination and other such practices, skills that were then used for the benefit of others. Some of these practices continue to the present day.

Although many of the mountain deities are understood to be goddesses, women were not permitted beyond a certain point on those mountains regarded as sacred by the *Shintō* religion and subsequently by *Shugendō.* This ban on women became known as *nyonin kekkai* (women prohibited), the boundaries being marked by engraved stones or wooden boards bearing this slogan. Not all mountains are regarded as sacred, and the prohibition varies from mountain to mountain. The origin of the ban probably stems from *Shintō* notions of impurity regarding those whose families had experienced a recent death, as well as menstruating women or those who had recently given birth. It is likely that women were also excluded to avoid temptation in the minds of the monks. Separation of the sexes does not necessarily imply discrimination (though it may lead to it), but relates to the practicalities of human nature.

Different mountains and mountain ranges had different traditions. In some instances, men were permitted to climb at one season, women at another. In modern times, with the decrease in the number of *Shugendō* practitioners, most of the bans have been removed, and the mountains have become tourist attractions. Only the ban on Mount Sanjō (popularly known as Mount Ōmine) of the Ōmine range and its *Shugendō* temple remains, although a special section of the mountain is reserved for women.

Through the various ascetic *Shugendō* practices, the *yamabushi* were able to develop supernatural powers, such as walking barefoot on hot embers or climbing ladders constructed of sharp swords, which some would exhibit at religious festivals. As a loosely knit group, they became famed as hermits, unordained monks (*ubasoku;* S. *upāsaka,* lay Buddhist worshipper), wandering holy men *(hijiri),* healers, exorcists, diviners, musicians, pilgrimage guides *(sendatsu),* and for performing religious rites and offering prayers on behalf of others.

Many of the *yamabushi* studied martial arts alongside their spiritual texts and ascetic practices. The martial arts have always been associated in the Japanese mind with personal development, and as monks and temples began to gain political influence, some abbots of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries even formed their own armies of warrior monks. Among them were *yamabushi,* who were held in high regard as mighty warriors possessing supernatural powers. Sometimes, they were involved in battles alongside or against *samurai* warriors. In later centuries, during the *Sengoku* period, a time of warring states, *yamabushi* advisers were found occupying key positions in the court hierarchy and in the armies of any serious contender for political supremacy.

Yamabushis thus practised a path that accommodated both *Shintō* and Buddhist principles and practice. In fact, for many centuries, the syncretism of *Shintō* and Japanese Buddhism (which often shared the same shrines, temples and officiating monks) remained a part of the Japanese religious landscape. In 1868, however, when Emperor Meiji regained power for the imperial throne from the feudal lords who had governed Japan under the overall the rule of the Tokugawa *shogun,* one of his first acts was to officially separate *Shintō* and Buddhism, in beliefs, practices, and institutions. In fact, during the early period of Emperor Meiji's rule, Buddhism found itself the focus of persecution, until the Buddhists were successful in their pursuit of tolerance under the new regime. In 1872, *Shugendō* was banned for its eclectic mix of traditions, and officiating *Shugendō* monks were offered a choice between becoming priests of *Shintō* shrines, or becoming fully ordained Buddhist monks within whichever *Tendai* or *Shingon* tradition they had previously been affiliated, or of entirely relinquishing their priestly role. It was not until 1946, when the legislation was repealed, that *Shugendō* was once again permitted a self-determining existence. This prompted the re-emergence of a number of independent *Shugendō* schools that had taken refuge in the *Tendai* and *Shingon* traditions.

Among the various *Shugendō* pilgrimage routes of modern times are Mount Ōmine and Mount Kinpusen (whose temple is also said to have been founded by En no Gyōja), both of which lie within the Yoshino-Kumano National Park in Japan's Kansai region. Designated by UNESCO in 2004 as a World Heritage Site, the park remains a popular pilgrimage centre and *yamabushi* training area. White-robed modern *yamabushi* can still be seen bearing conch-shell trumpets on their belts and a book of incantations on their backs.[1]

See also: **hijiri**, **honji suijaku** (7.2), **Shugendō** (▸3).

1. See "shugendō," *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism, ODB;* "Mount Ōmine," "Shugendō," "Yamabushi," *Wikipedia,* ret. June 2013; "Shugendō," *A-to-Z Photo Dictionary, AZPD;* "space, sacred," *Encyclopedia of Buddhism, EBRB.*

yār (P) *Lit.* friend, companion, comrade, beloved; mystically, the divine friend or beloved; God or a spiritual master, in either his physical or spiritual form.

Many Sufi poets have used the term when speaking of the yearning to meet the divine beloved within. Rūmī says that the coming of the friend is a time of great joy. This coming can be understood both internally and externally:

> That Joseph, handsome of cheek, has come,
> that Jesus of the age has come. . . .
> Today, the city is like paradise:
> saying, "The prince has come."
> Beat the drum, for it is the day of festival:
> be joyous, for the friend *(yār)* has come.
> A moon has raised its head from the Unseen,
> in comparison with which this moon has become as dust. . . .
> O exiled bird with cut pinions,
> in the place of two wings, four have come.
> O heart, bound in breast, open,
> for that lost one has come into your bosom.
> Foot, come and stamp,
> for that illustrious cupbearer has come.
> Speak not of the old man, for he has become young,
> and speak not of yesteryear,
> for the friend *(yār)* has come. . . .
> Be silent, and count not his graces:
> it is an immeasurable grace that he has come.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 707:7394, 99, 7400–1, 4–7, 12, KSD2 pp.97–98; cf. MP1 (88:1, 6–8, 11–14, 18) pp.76–77*

The real dwelling place of this friend is within, where the soul can remain in his company eternally:

> In the religion of lovers, even a moment
> away from the lane of the friend *(yār)* is forbidden.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 381:4070, KSD1 p.225*

When he is found within, then the entire universe is accessible to the lover:

> When we sleep in the lane of the friend *(yār),*
> our bedside and cover is the Pleiades. . . .
> When the image of His beauty shines,
> earth and mountains become our silk and brocade.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 364:3898, 3900, KSD1 p.216*

But, says Rūmī, in the lane of love, there is only room for the beloved:

That friend *(yār)* calls only you –
it is not in your interest to bring your self along.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 343:3711, KSD1 p.206

Yet the path to the inner beloved is full of contradictions that steadily erode the lover's intellect and ego:

Off with you! Know that the lover's religion
is contrary to other ways;
For false dealings from the friend *(yār)*
are better than sincerity and kindliness.
What is unthinkable is for him the actual state of affairs,
his chastisement is the reward, all his tyranny is justice,
his slander is equity.
His harshness is soft, his synagogue the *Kaʿbah* –
the thorn driven home by the heart-ravisher
is sweeter than roses and basil.
When he is sour, he is more excellent than a house of sugar;
When he comes to you in annoyance, he is all affection and kisses.
When he says to you, "By God, I am sick of you!",
that is Khiżr's elixir from the Fountain of Life.
When he says "No!" a thousand "Yea's" are hidden within it;
In this religion of the selfless,
he becomes family and self by remaining a stranger.
His unbelief is faith, his stones all coral,
his miserliness generosity, his offences all forgiveness.
If you taunt me and say, "Your religion is bent out of shape!" –
well, I have bought the religion of his bent eyebrow
for the price of my spirit.
This bent religion has made me drunk! Enough!
I will shut my lips – you continue, O illuminated heart,
and recite the rest silently!
O Lord! O Shams of God Tabrīzī! What sugar you pour down!
You voice a hundred arguments and proofs from my mouth!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1869:19706–15,
KSD4 pp.150–51, in SPL pp.219–20

Though the disciple may experience this sweet pain of the friend's love, the friend will also reward him with moments and days of pure joy:

Daytime today is my turn to view the beloved *(dilbar):*
daytime today the greatest sun will ascend.
Yesterday the friend *(yār)* was all severity and blood-drinking,
but today he is absolute gentleness, and the nurture of the helpless.
Speak nothing of *houris,* moons, spirits or peris,
for none of these resemble him – he is something else.
Whoever has seen his face *(chihrah)*
and has not been destroyed is not a man – he is a block of marble.

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 448:4713–16, KSD1 p.259, in SPL p.298

But the essence of the relationship is the gradual elimination of the lover's sense of I-ness:

A certain man knocked at his friend's *(yār)* door:
his friend *(yār)* asked, "Who is there?"
He answered, "I".
"Be gone", said his friend *(yār),* "it's too soon!
At my table there is no place for the raw.
How shall the raw be cooked but in the fire of absence?
What else will deliver him from hypocrisy?"

He sadly turned away, and for a whole year
the flames of separation consumed him;
Then he came back, and again paced to and fro
beside the house of his friend *(yār).*
He knocked at the door with a hundred fears and respects
lest any disrespectful word might escape his lips.
"Who is there?" cried the friend *(yār).*
He answered: "You, O charmer of all hearts."
"Now", said the friend *(yār),* "since you are I, come in,
there is no room for two I's in this house.
The double end of thread is not for the needle:
since you are single, come into this needle."

Rūmī, Maśnavī I:3056–64; cf. MJR2 p.167

The drowning man suffers an agony of soul
and clutches at every straw.
For fear of (losing) his head (life),
he flings about (both) hand and foot
to see whether anyone will take his hand (help him) in peril.
The friend *(yār)* loves this agitation:
it is better to struggle vainly than to lie still.

Rūmī, Maśnavī I:1817–19, MJR4 p.99

Rūmī points out that since the purpose of *khalvat* (seclusion) is to be alone with God and that the "friend" is the one who guides the seeker to Him, to seek seclusion from the friend would be like putting on a fur coat in spring, rather than winter:

Go, seek at once the friend of God *(yār-i Khudā):*
when you have done so, God is your friend *(yār).*
He who has fixed his sights upon seclusion *(khalvat)* –
it is from the friend *(yār)* that he has learned that lesson.
One must seclude oneself from strangers,
but not from the friend *(yār):*
the fur coat is for winter, not for spring.
If spirit *('aql)* is paired with another spirit,
light increases and the way becomes clear;
But if the *nafs* (lower mind) makes merry with another mind,
darkness increases and the way becomes hidden.

Rūmī, Maśnavī II:23–27; cf. MJR2 p.223

No one who has found the friend can remain bitter, for he is a friend and guide who is never absent. Like the "Guarded Tablet" in heaven (upon which the *Qur'ān* and all destiny is written), he knows everything:

The heart that has seen the sweetheart,
how can it remain bitter?
When a nightingale has seen the rose,
how can it remain silent?…
To the friend *(yār)* when he is seated beside his friend *(yār),*
a hundred thousand tablets of mystery are made known.
The brow of the friend *(yār)* is a Guarded Tablet:
to his friend *(yār),* it reveals plainly the secret of the two worlds.
The friend *(yār)* is the guide *(hādī)* along the way
during (his friend's) progress.

Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:2639, 2641–43; cf. MJR6 p.404

Other Sufis have described the relationship in the same way. Maghribī points out that before the friend can be found within, all vestiges of the world must have dropped away from the mind:

First I shook the world from my skirts,
then sincerely seized the skirts of the friend *(yār).*

Maghribī, Dīvān 133:1283, DSMR p.169; cf. in SSE2 p.43

Then begins the game of yearning, of hide and seek, that drives out the last traces of selfhood, as the beloved shows himself, and sometimes does not. When the friend is with the lover, writes Ḥāfiẓ, everything is fulfilled:

> The friend *(yār)* is with us: what need is there to ask for more?
> It is enough for us to be with that dear friend *(mu'nis).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.142, DIH p.249; cf. DHWC (315:6) p.545*

When the friend *(yār)* withdraws himself, says ʿAṭṭār, then the lover is filled with longing:

> We are constantly in pain, without relief:
> O for the dust of the threshold of the friend *(yār).*
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 33:1972, DASN p.114; cf. in SSE2 p.43*

Without the presence of the friend, says Ḥāfiẓ, even the most beautiful of things seem insipid:

> Garden, roses, and wine are all pleasant:
> But in the absence of the friend *(yār),* they bring no joy.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (231:4) p.234, DIH p.196; cf. DHWC (155:6) p.307*

The experience of the inner vision of the friend is so immense, he writes, that nothing can be compared to it:

> Do you know what good fortune is?
> It is having the vision of the friend *(yār):*
> in his street, poverty is preferable to sovereignty.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.212, DIH p.344; cf. DHWC (453:1) p.755*

> Sell not the friend *(yār),* even for the whole world:
> he who sold Joseph for base gold got nothing.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.78, DIH p.154; cf. DHWC (260:6) p.464*

> How can he who has thoughts of high and low
> remain with the friend *(yār)?*
> He who always has the company of the friend *(yār)* is happy of heart.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (191:5–6) p.197, DIH p.163; cf. DHWC (262:6–7) p.467*

> This endless talk they speak
> concerning the beauty of the beloved *(yār)*
> is but one word out of thousands that could be said.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.77, DIH p.159; cf. DHWC (166:4) p.320*

This beauty, he says, is not hidden – except by the veil of the body and ego:

> The beauty of the true beloved *(yār)*
> is neither veiled nor screened.
> Just lay aside the dust of your existence,
> so that you can cast a glance at him.
>
> You who do not leave the house of nature (the body):
> how can you expect to gain entry
> to the street of Reality *(Ḥaqīqat)?*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.54, DIH p.122; cf. DHWC (125:6–7) p.262*

See also: **dūst**, **yār** (▸1).

yati (S/H/Pa), **jatī** (H/Pu) *Lit.* one who strives, one who is restrained; an ascetic, a renunciate, a renouncer, a hermit, a yogi, a *sannyāsin,* a monk, a spiritual seeker, a devotee; a disciplined person; one who controls his mind and senses; also, restraint, control; from the root *yat,* which means to strive, to be eager, to persevere, to be vigilant, to be prepared – all qualities of the ideal seeker of the divine Truth; not to be confused with *jaṭi* and *jaṭila,* both meaning 'one with matted hair' and also used as terms for an ascetic.

There are a few places in the *Upanishads* and other Indian texts where *yati* is used with other meanings. In the *Ṛig Veda* and (possibly) the *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad, yatis* are assistant deities who help in the creation of the universe; they "cause the world to swell, drawing forth the sun that was in the ocean".[1] Every *deva* has an assistant in the form of a *yati,* who helps complete the work of creation. The greatest *yati* or *yogī* of them all is *Shiva,* understood as both the first *yogī* and the regulating principle of the cosmos.[2] Here, perhaps, the divine nature of the spiritually advanced *yati* is being portrayed in mythologized form. *Yatis* also play a part in other Vedic myths.[3]

Generally, in Vedic and Sanskrit literature, *yatis* are spiritual practitioners, ascetics, or yogis. The references are sometimes less than complimentary, and it is a widespread scholarly opinion that *yatis* belonged to the pre-Vedic, non-Aryan culture. In the *Kaushītaki Upanishad* and the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā,* the deity *Indra* has them thrown to wolves and hyenas.[4] A passage in the *Ṛig Veda,* on the other hand, has the *yatis* praising *Indra.*[5]

By the time of later brahmanical texts such as the *Manu Smṛiti* – a well-known manual of Hindu social and religious custom (dated to between the second century BCE and the second century CE) – the *yati* as a wandering ascetic has clearly become accepted as a part of life. After defining the fourth stage of life as that of the wandering renunciate *(parivrāja),*[6] the author goes on to outline the rules governing a renunciate's way of life, the manner of his

begging, and the kinds of wooden dishes that make suitable begging bowls. The renunciate is now termed a *yati,* a term used synonymously in this text with *parivrāja:*

> Neither by (explaining) portents and omens, nor by skill in astrology and palmistry, nor by giving advice and by the exposition (of the *shāstras*), should he ever seek to obtain alms.
>
> He should not enter a house crowded with hermits, *brāhmaṇs,* birds, dogs, mendicants, or others. With his hair, nails, and beard clipped, carrying an alms bowl, a staff, and a water pot, he should continually wander, controlling himself and not hurting any creature.
>
> His vessels should not be made of metal, they should be free from fractures; like sacrificial ladles during the celebration of a religious sacrifice, they should be cleansed with water. Vessels made of gourds, wood, clay or bamboo, has Manu son of Svayambhū declared suitable for an ascetic *(yati).*
>
> He should go to beg once a day, and not be eager to obtain a large quantity; for an ascetic *(yati)* who eagerly seeks alms will become attached to sensual enjoyments. When no smoke ascends from (the kitchen), when the pestle lies motionless, when the embers have been extinguished, when the people have finished their meal, when the remnants in the dishes have been removed, then should the ascetic *(yati)* always go to beg. He should not be sorry when he obtains nothing, nor rejoice when he obtains something. He should accept so much only as will sustain life. He should become free from attachment to his belongings.
>
> Let him disdain all alms given with honoured salutations, for even an ascetic *(yati)* who has attained liberation is bound once more by accepting such gifts. By eating little, and by standing and sitting in solitude, he should restrain his senses from attraction to sense objects. By control of his senses, by elimination of attraction and aversion, and by refraining from doing harm to other creatures, he becomes fit for immortality.
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:50–60; cf. MSDN pp.216–17, SBE25 pp.208–9*

The text also considers the mental and philosophical attitude, and the means of attaining it *(yoga),* that is appropriate for a *yati* in the fourth stage of life:

> He should reflect upon the sufferings of human beings, brought about by their evil deeds: on their falling into hell, and on the dreadful torments in the world of *Yama* (lord of Death); on their separation from dear ones and association with the loathsome; on the ravages of age

> and the affliction of disease; on the departure of the soul from the body and its rebirth in another womb, and on its wanderings through ten thousand millions of existences; on the infliction of pain endured by all embodied creatures, which is brought about by evil deeds, and on the eternal bliss resulting from virtue and spiritual wealth. By deep meditation *(yoga),* he must recognize the subtle nature of the supreme Soul *(Paramātmā),* and its presence in all living beings, high or low.
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:61–65; cf. MSDN pp.217–18, SBE25 pp.209–10*

In consideration of the suffering of all incarnate souls, he must try and cause the least harm to other creatures, at the same time practising *prāṇāyāma* (control of the *prāṇa,* the subtle breath or life energy), which will clear all negative impressions:

> In order to protect living creatures, let him always, by day and by night, even if it brings pain to his body, walk carefully, scanning the ground. In order to expiate (the sin) of unintentionally injuring such creatures by day or by night, an ascetic *(yati)* should bathe and perform the six *prāṇāyāma* exercises.
>
> Even three of the *prāṇāyāma* exercises, practised in the correct manner and accompanied by recitation of *Praṇava (i.e. Aum)* and *vyāhṛitis* (utterance, recitation of the names of the seven worlds), should be understood as the highest penance for every *brāhmaṇ;* for just as the impurities of metallic ores, melted in a furnace, are consumed, even so are the impurities of the senses destroyed through the control of the *prāṇas.*
>
> He should burn up his impurities *(dosha)* through *prāṇāyāma,* his faults *(kilvisha)* by concentration *(dhāraṇā),* his attachment *(saṃsarga)* by withdrawal from the senses *(pratyāhāra),* and all ungodly qualities *(anīshvarān guṇān)* by meditation *(dhyāna).*
>
> Through the practice of meditation *(dhyāna-yogena),* he will recognize the passage of the inner soul *(antarātman)* through all living beings, high and low, something that is hard for degenerate people to understand.
>
> He who possesses right understanding *(samyag-darshana)* is not fettered by his deeds; but he who is destitute of that insight *(darshana)* is drawn into the circle of births and deaths. By not injuring any creature, by control of the senses, by the rites prescribed in the *Vedas,* and by the practice of rigorous austerities *(tapa),* can that state be attained, even while in this world.
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:68–75; cf. MSDN pp.218–19, SBE25 pp.210–12*

By means of meditation, the *yati* must detach himself from his body, ultimately becoming altogether free of both the body and the various negativities associated with it:

> He should quit this dwelling, composed of the five elements, where bones are the pillars, held together by tendons; where flesh and the blood are the mortar, thatched with the skin; which is foul smelling, filled with urine and faeces, subject to old age and sorrow, the seat of disease, afflicted with pain, replete with passion *(rajasvala),* and transient. When he abandons this body, like a bird which flies from a tree that falls from the river bank, he escapes the painful jaws of the (waiting) crocodile (probably representing *Yama*).[7]
>
> Leaving (the merit of) his good deeds to his friends and (the demerit of) his evil deeds to his enemies, he attains the eternal *Brahman* by the practice of meditation *(dhyāna yoga).*
>
> When by disposition, he becomes detached from all worldly things, he obtains eternal bliss both here and hereafter. By gradually relinquishing all attachments and becoming free from all the pairs of opposites, he comes to rest in *Brahman* alone.
>
> All that has been declared above depends on meditation *(dhyāna);* for no one ignorant of the highest soul *(adhyātma)* can reap the fruits of his practices *(kriyāphala).*
>
> He should constantly repeat those texts that refer to the Vedic sacrifices, those referring to the deities, and those that are concerned with the soul *(adhyātma)* and are contained in the *Vedānta.* That *(Brahman)* is the refuge of the ignorant as well as the all-knowing; It is the final goal of those who seek the endless bliss of heaven.
>
> A twice-born man who becomes a wandering ascetic *(parivrāja),* after the continuous performance of the above-mentioned practices, shakes off all sin *(pāpa)* and reaches the highest *Brahman.*
>
> *Manu Smṛiti 6:76–85; cf. MSDN pp.219–20, SBE25 pp.212–14*

In the *Bhagavad Gītā,* a *yati* is a spiritual seeker, probably a yogi, in quest of the Divine:

> To those *yatis* who are free from lust *(kāma)* and anger *(krodha),*
> who have control over their minds,
> and who know their real nature to be the spirit *(ātman)* –
> The attainment of beatitude *(nirvāṇa)* in *Brahman* is close at hand.
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 5:26*

The *Advaya-Tāraka Upanishad* similarly speaks of "the *yati* who has controlled his senses and is full of the six qualities", these six being tranquillity,

self-control, tolerance, cheerful endurance, one-pointedness, and faith.[8] In the *Āruṇeya Upanishad,* a *yati* is a wandering ascetic who is advised to follow one of the usual mendicant customs:

> The *yati* should stay at one place during the four months of the rainy season, and during the remaining eight months wander alone or with a single companion – yes, just a single companion.
>
> *Āruṇeya Upanishad 4; cf. MUM p.69*

In the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad,* a *yati* is a spiritually enlightened human being, mentioned alongside *ṛishis,* the mystic sages of ancient India:

> The *ṛishis* who have attained Him are contented with wisdom,
> perfected in soul, free from passion, tranquil.
> Realizing the All-Pervading to be everywhere:
> those wise and devoted ones enter into the All.
>
> *Yatis,* having fully realized the meaning of Vedantic knowledge,
> their natures purified through the discipline of *yoga* –
> All, at the moment of their departure, pass beyond death,
> and are liberated in the realm of *Brahman.*[9]
>
> *Muṇḍaka Upanishad 3:2.5–6*

> The soul *(ātmā)* is not attained by the faint-hearted,
> nor through heedlessness *(pramāda),* nor by austerities.
> That wise one *(vidvān)* who strives by the proper means –
> his soul *(ātmā)* enters the abode of *Brahman.*. . .

> The self *(ātmā)* within the body, pure and made of light *(jyotis),*
> may be won through unceasing truth *(satya),* concentration *(tapas),*
> right knowledge, and constant chastity.
> Spiritual practitioners *(yatis),* purified of imperfections, behold Him.

> Truth *(satya)* alone conquers, not untruth.
> By truth *(satya)* is unfolded the path to the gods *(devayāna)*
> by which the sages, free from desire,
> travel to the supreme abode of truth *(satya).*
>
> *Muṇḍaka Upanishad 3:2.4, 3:1.5–6*

In his *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi,* the ninth-century Vedantist and yogic practitioner Shankara, using the term in a general sense as one who strives for spiritual enlightenment, has described the ideal state of the spiritual seeker or devotee *(yati):*

Increase of desire *(vāsanā)* leads to action *(kārya),* and increase of action leads to desire; thus the transmigration *(saṃsāra)* of man never comes to an end. To break the chain of transmigration, the seeker *(yati)* should burn them both to ashes. Increase of desire is because of these two: thought and action. . . .

The seeker *(yati)* should cease dwelling on the unreal, which causes bondage, thus remaining in the *Ātman* (Self), (thinking) "I myself am That." Truly, steadfastness in *Brahman,* through realization of one's own identity with It, gives rise to bliss, completely removing the misery born of (spiritual) ignorance, which one otherwise experiences. . . .

Tranquil, self-controlled, completely withdrawn (from the senses), steadfast in forbearance, practising meditation *(samādhi),* the seeker *(yati)* contemplates his self as the Self of all. Totally destroying the thoughts arising from the blindness of ignorance, he lives blissfully as *Brahman,* actionless and changeless *(nirvikalpa).* . . . That seeker *(yati)* is of steady wisdom who, having merged himself entirely in *Brahman,* enjoys eternal bliss, changeless and actionless. . . .

That seeker *(yati)* is truly liberated in whom the things of the senses . . . are received – because of his union with Existence Itself – as rivers flow into the sea, having no effect. . . .

Just as milk mixed with milk, or oil with oil, become one, so too is the sage *(muni)* who attains realization of the self *(ātman)* in the Self *(Ātman).* In this manner, beyond the body, utterly one *(kaivalya)* with Existence Itself, having attained the undivided state of *Brahman,* the seeker *(yati)* no longer suffers transmigration. . . .

May the seekers *(yatis)* of liberation, who have completely eliminated all desires of the mind in the prescribed manner, who are averse to the pleasures of the world, who are of tranquil mind, who take delight in the scriptures, appreciate this beneficial teaching.

Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 313–14, 333, 355, 426, 441, 566–67, 579; cf. VCSM pp.119, 126, 135, 161, 166, 210–11, 215

Not all Indian mystics, however, have practised *yoga* and *prāṇāyāma.* Purandaradāsa (*c.*1484–1564), musician-saint of Kannada, believes simply in remembrance of God and devotion to Him:

O mind, do not forget remembrance of the Lord!
You do not have to perform *yogas* and *yajñas* (sacrifices),
nor need you be a *yogī* or a *yati.*
Sing and worship the Lord who . . . is revered by Nārada!

Purandaradāsa, Maraya Beṛā 8; cf. in SSI1 pp.214–15

Speaking from the perspective of the Indian *sant* tradition, Swami Shiv Dayal Singh says that there is a more effective way to find God than the life of an ascetic. He advises the finding of a true *guru,* one who puts his disciples in contact with the inner music of the divine Word *(Shabd).* This Word then takes his disciples beyond the realms of the higher mind, beyond the stage of *Brahm* or universal mind, which is the highest stage known to the *jatīs* and other ascetics of the yogic tradition. Opening his disciples' powers of inner vision *(nirat)* and hearing *(surat),* such a *guru* takes them back to God on the current of the *Shabd:*

> He reveals to them inner secrets, the unstruck music,
> the *Shabd* in the sphere of *sunn.*
> He shows them the stage that is beyond
> the reach of *jogīs, jatīs,* and *nāths.*
> With the help of *surat* and *nirat,* he shows his disciples
> *sat Nām* (the true Lord), and his true abode.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 8:9.6–8, SBP p.80, SBPS pp.62–63*

Most if not all spiritual seekers acknowledge that the primary obstacle to spiritual progress is the vacillating mind and its passions. But, says Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, asceticism does not actually work as a means of controlling the mind, because it only results in suppression, not elimination. The only permanent means of conquering the mind is to attach it to the one power, the inner Melody, which comes from beyond the mind, and can take the soul back to its own source in God. All other powers, such as the *prāṇa* of the yogis, are essentially subsidiary currents of the primal *Shabd* or *Dhun* (Melody), and can only take their practitioners to the level from which they originate:

> A million other methods will fail to tame it,
> it will submit only by listening to that Melody *(Dhun).*
> The *jogīs* practise their own methods,
> while the learned are busy with knowledge and discussion.
> Ascetics *(tapsī)* wear themselves out with penances,
> and *jatīs* with their struggle *(jat)* against lust.
> *Dhyānis* (contemplators) only delude themselves
> in mental contemplation.
> Priests read and recite the scriptures –
> they too waste their energies, in learning and preaching.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 9:9.1–5,*
> *SBP p.93; cf. SBPS pp.92–93*

Guru Gobind Singh says that whoever and whatever human beings may be, they are all "images of the One":

One is clean-shaven *(sannyāsī),* one a *jogī,*
one a *brahmchārī* (celibate), one a *jatī,*
one a Hindu, one a Turk,
one a *rafjī (Shī'ah),* one an *Imāmsāfī (Sunnī)* –
Know all to be men.
He is the merciful Creator and also the Sustainer.
There is no difference; it is all ignorance (to consider otherwise).
Serve Him, for the *gurdev* is one:
all are images of the One, and have the same Light.

Guru Gobind Singh, Dasam Granth, Akāl Ustat 15:85,
DGG1 p.19; cf. in PMS4 p.xxiii

In Jainism, a *yati* is a *Shvetāmbara* monk, especially of times past, who took less rigorous vows than those of the full mendicant and did not perform the six obligatory rites *(āvashyakas).* Originally known as *chaityavāsins* (temple-dwellers), *yatis* lived in a dwelling in the temple complex, slept in a bed, wore shoes, cut their hair, shaved, and could travel in a vehicle, none of which are permitted to the full, itinerant mendicant. They were also allowed to earn money from the performance of temple rites for the laity, often with a magical or tantric bias; and some had a knowledge of astrology and ayurvedic medicine. They were also the administrators of the temple, with its property, libraries, and land. Some were responsible for maintaining a record of births, deaths, and marriages in the Jain community. All in all, they enjoyed a more comfortable and domesticated lifestyle than their renunciate counterparts. Some, known as *saṃsārīs* (worldly ones), were married and possessed property; others (*tyāgīs,* renunciates) remained unmarried and celibate.

As their numbers grew, the medieval *yatis* organized themselves into groups and branches, each lineage led by a *shrīpūjya* (revered and honourable one), some of whom became very wealthy, lived in considerable style, sat on a throne in the monks' dwelling hall *(upāshraya),* wore elaborate shawls donated by the laity, rode in palanquins, and were influential among Muslim and Rajput rulers. Their property and status were passed on to their successors, whom they themselves appointed.

Yatis were contrasted with *saṃvegī sādhus* (monks desirous of emancipation), who fully observed the mendicant vows. But despite numerous efforts at reform, by the late nineteenth century only a few dozen *saṃvegī sādhus* remained, the rest were *yatis.* Starting in the nineteenth century, in an attempt to reverse the decline, several *āchāryas,* with the support of influential members of the laity, have campaigned with considerable success against the lax practices of the *yatis.* Included among the various reforms was the introduction of yellow robes for the *saṃvegī sādhus* to distinguish them from the white-robed *yatis.* As a result, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, the number of *yatis* has radically declined, and the *saṃvegī sādhus*

are once again numerically superior. In 1999, the number of recorded *saṃvegī sādhus* was nearly 7,000.[10]

Twelve *shrīpūjya* lineages once existed in the *Tapā Gachchha,* the largest *Mūrtipūjaka* lineage. But nowadays, only a few *yatis* remain; they are members of the *Kharatara Gachchha* and are associated with the *shrīpūjya* seats in the Rajasthani city of Bikaner. The property once owned by the *shrīpūjyas* has passed into the hands of the laity, who are also responsible for temple administration. Although the *Tapā Gachchha* remains the largest *Shvetāmbara gachchha,* no *yatis* remain, and its *shrīpūjya* lineages have disappeared.

See also: **chaityavāsin**, **parivrāja**.

1. *Ṛig Veda* 10:72.6–7; *cf. RV* p.39; see also *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad* 5:3, *PU* p.739, reading *yatayaḥ* (pl. of *yati*) for *patayaḥ* (rulers).
2. See "Yati(s)," *A Dictionary of Hinduism, DH* p.348; Ralph Griffith, *Hymns of the Ṛgveda, HRV2* p.123.
3. See *Vedic Index, VIN2* p.185.
4. *Kaushītaki Upanishad* 3:1; *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 2:4.9.2, 6:2.7.5; see L.M. Joshi, *Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, BBHE.*
5. *Ṛig Veda* 8:6.18.
6. *Manu Smṛiti* 6:33–49.
7. See Patrick Olivelle, *Manu's Code of Law, MCLM* pp.152, 291–92.
8. *Advaya-Tāraka Upanishad* 1, *YU* p.1.
9. See also *Mahānārāyaṇa Upanishad* 12:15.
10. See "yati," "saṃvegī sādhu," *A to Z of Jainism, AZJW.*

yǐnshì (C) *Lit.* a commendable person *(shì)* concealed or hidden from view *(yǐn);* a hermit, a recluse, a solitary. In Daoism, a dedicated Daoist practitioner may withdraw into a life of seclusion and live as a hermit or recluse in order to avoid the distractions associated with social contact and the diversity of worldly life. While a solitary life is not dependant upon being in a remote location, most *yǐnshì* referred to in Daoist writings did live well away from society, often in mountainous regions that are typically difficult to reach. Mountains also have a spiritual significance in Daoism.

The Chinese of ancient times had a long tradition of retirement from the world after their careers and worldly successes had peaked. Lǎozǐ concurs with the idea:

> To hold and fill to overflowing
> is not as good as to stop in time.
> Sharpen a sword-edge to its very sharpest,
> and the (edge) will not last long.

When gold and jade fill your hall,
you will not be able to keep them.
To be proud with honour and wealth
is to cause one's own downfall.
Withdraw *(tuì)* as soon as your work is done.
Such is heaven's Way *(tiān zhī Dào).*

Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 9, SBCP p.143

Most biographies of Lǎozǐ say that he was a minor government official who retreated to obscurity outside China's western borders in order to focus on his spiritual practice. Despite the many conflicting stories regarding his life, most acknowledge his having been a *yǐnshì* for some time.

Early Daoism is associated with the simple and natural contemplative existence enjoyed by those who withdrew to secluded places, most commonly in mountains, but also in other forested areas, either in the quest for spirituality, or in a retreat for personal renewal, or in civic protest, or simply to free themselves from familial, political, economic, and social obligations. This venture into life as a *yǐnshì* could last anything from a few years to a lifetime.

Many masters lived as *yǐnshì* and were sought out by seekers of the *Dào.* Some *yǐnshì,* having immersed themselves in solitary living for long periods of time, later returned to society to share publicly or privately the insights they had gained.

In pursuit of the realization of and eventual union with *Dào,* the *yǐnshì* spent years honing the purity and clarity of his mind and spirit. Living in social isolation for a period of time, with almost no worldly distractions, the *yǐnshì* had ample opportunity to observe nature, and to reflect upon it. Together with the inner progress he made in meditation, living in this manner enabled the *yǐnshì* to realize the harmonious interplay between *yīn* and *yáng* in nature – hot and cold, light and dark, summer and winter, birth and death, hunter and hunted. He realized that the laws of nature and its 'dualities' reflect the spontaneous nature of the *Dào.*

Most *yǐnshì* went to the wilderness in search of either spiritual or physical immortality, using the techniques and methods of *nèidān* (inner alchemy) or *wàidān* (outer alchemy) respectively. They kept to a simple diet, often excluding meat or grains. This is because they found from experience that a diet of pine nuts, plants, and roots enhances health and lengthens life.[1]

There are many such hermits in China today. In the Mount Zhōngnán range alone, which from archaeological evidence seems to have been populated by hermits and recluses for over 5,000 years, it is estimated that as many as 5,000 Daoists, Buddhists, and others still practise a hermitic way of life. Zhōngnánshān, in central China and at that time the western gateway to the kingdom, is an important mountain in Daoism. According to legend, Yǐn Xǐ, the guardian of the pass through the Zhōngnán range, intercepted Lǎozǐ as

the latter was leaving China, on his way westward. Yǐn Xǐ recognized Lǎozǐ and invited him to stay at his home Lóuguàn ('Lookout Tower') and asked him to write down his teachings in what later became known as the *Dàodé jīng*. After retirement, Yǐn Xǐ built a shrine at Lóuguàn. Later, King Mù built a temple on the site, which became the first Daoist monastery and is to this day a flourishing Daoist centre.

According to historical records, twelfth-century Daoist master Wáng Zhé (*aka.* Chóngyáng), after receiving spiritual teachings from two Daoist immortals *(xiān),* dug himself a grave somewhere in the Zhōngnán mountain range that he called the 'Tomb of the Living Dead', where he lived as a *yǐnshì* for three years. After the three years had passed, he filled in the grave and built a hut on the same site, now calling it his 'Complete Perfection Hut', presumably after the spiritual state that he had by then attained. There he lived for a further four years, while continuing his Daoist practices and teaching others. Later, Wáng Zhé's teachings were referred to as the 'Teachings of Complete Perfection' (after the hut) and his branch of Daoism became known as the *Quánzhēn* ('Complete Perfection') school, which is one of the largest branches of modern Daoism.

See also: **guǎyù**, **shānlín zhī shì**, **shèngdì** (▸3), **yú**.

1. See *e.g. Tàixuán bǎodiǎn* 1:3.7, in *NEL* p.88; Livia Kohn, *Daoism Handbook, DHK1* p.127; Stephen Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures, EDSB* p.69 (n.39).

yogāvacara (Pa) *Lit.* practitioner *(avacara)* of *yoga;* one who practises spiritual exercises; a *yogī,* a meditator, a spiritual practitioner; one who is proficient in spiritual practice; one who is conversant with contemplative practice; a Buddhist term for someone who is cultivating and purifying his mind in order to increase its power of concentration, leading to spiritual insight *(vipassanā);* one who practises *vipassanā* (insight meditation) as described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta,*[1] maintaining within himself a state of unwavering vigilance *(appamāda)* and mindfulness *(sati, paṭisati, anussati).*

The term first appears in the *Milinda-Pañha* ('Questions of Milinda'), probably dating from early in the Common Era (CE). In an early chapter of this dialogue, the Buddhist sage Nāgasena describes to King Milinda how the *yogāvacara,* depicted as the idealized Buddhist follower, takes hold of his mind; eradicates his impurities *(kilesa);* develops good conduct, faith, effort and perseverance, mindfulness *(sati),* and meditation *(samādhi);* longs to attain the spiritual elevation of an *arahanta;* eliminates evil and retains what is good through the practice of mindfulness *(sati);* and – just as a man dispels darkness from his house by lighting a lamp – develops a wisdom that dispels

the darkness of spiritual ignorance, permitting the light of understanding to shine forth, so that he clearly perceives the impermanence of all things, the inherent suffering *(dukkha)* in the world, and the absence of an individual self or soul *(anatta)*.[2]

Towards the end of the text, through a long sequence of similes, Nāgasena again portrays the earnest *yogāvacara* as someone who is never lazy; rises early; keeps his simple, solitary dwelling clean and tidy; practises continuous self-examination; is circumspect about what he eats; is deaf, dumb, blind and unresponsive to sensual attractions; is always mindful; is full of the resolve never to be reborn; has compassion and lovingkindness for all living beings; dives deep into the waters of meditation in order to become free of impurities *(kilesa)* and remains constantly engaged in the struggle against them; relinquishes worldly desires; conducts himself according to the teachings of the Buddha; has harmonious relationships with his fellow monks, and shares with them the fruits of his begging for food; chooses a modest, good-natured, inspiring teacher of noble character, learned in Buddhist scriptures; and many other things of a similar nature.[3]

In the instruction manual, the *Visuddhimagga* ('Path of Purification'), Buddhaghosa uses *yogāvacara* and *yogī* synonymously to mean one who practises meditation. The mind, he says, is like a monkey who lives in a palm grove containing thirty-two trees, and the meditator *(yogāvacara)* is like a hunter who pursues the monkey. The monkey's dwelling of thirty-two trees represents the thirty-two parts of the body according to Buddhist lore. These include the head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, kidneys, heart, liver, bones, urine, and so on. Pursued by the hunter, the monkey leaps successively from tree to tree returning at last to the first tree, where the cycle restarts. Eventually, it settles down in one place and catches hold of the palmtree's central leaf spike. Then it does not leap about even when struck by the hunter's arrow. Buddhaghosa is describing a form of meditation in which the meditator sequentially reviews the essential impurity of the thirty-two parts of the body in order to impress upon his mind the essential transience of the body and its mortality, in order to bring about his detachment from it. He continues with this mindfulness of the body, gradually omitting the various bodily parts until he becomes absorbed in just one part.[4]

Similarly, Buddhaghosa uses the term *yogāvacara* in passages describing meditation practices, the place in which a meditator should dwell, the lovingkindness *(mettā)* to be developed by a meditator, his transformation by supernormal power, his search for the origins of the mind (likened to a man who seeks a snake he has seen in his house), and so on.[5]

In a sequence of six similes, he also likens a famished man's hunger and longing for food to the meditator's *(yogāvacara)* hunger and longing – brought about by suffering in the continuous cycle of birth and rebirth – for the deathless food of mindfulness; a parched man's thirst and longing for water to the

meditator's *(yogāvacara)* longing for the noble drink of the eightfold path; a frozen man's cold and longing for warmth to the meditator *(yogāvacara)* chilled by desire and selfishness, who longs for the fire of the path that burns up all defilements *(kilesa);* the longing for cold of a man made faint with heat to the longing for *nibbāna* of the meditator *(yogāvacara)* scorched by the burning of the eleven fires (of lust, hatred, delusion, birth, aging, death, sorrows, lamentations, physical suffering, mental suffering, and despair)[6] in the round of birth and death; the longing for light of a man shrouded in darkness to the meditator's *(yogāvacara)* darkness of ignorance *(avijjā)* and his longing for the light of the knowledge of spiritual evolution; and the sickness of a poisoned man and his longing for an antidote to the meditator's *(yogāvacara)* spiritual sickness arising from his impurities *(kilesa),* who longs for *nibbāna* and the destruction of all defilements.[7]

1. *Majjhima Nikāya* 10, *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta, PTSM1* pp.55–63; *Dīgha Nikāya* 22, *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, PTSD2* pp.290–315.
2. *Questions of King Milinda* 2:1.8–14, *PTSQ* pp.33–44, *SBE35* pp.51–61.
3. *Questions of King Milinda* 7:1–7, *PTSQ* pp.365–419, *SBE36* pp.279–372.
4. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 8:42–69, 71, 95, *PTSV* pp.239–46, 252, *PPVM* pp.236–42, 246.
5. *E.g.* Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 8:155–56, 9:1, 59, 12:8, 18:4, *PTSV* pp.269–70, 295, 311, 375, 587–88, *PPVM* pp.262, 291, 306, 371, 610.
6. *Cf. Saṃyutta Nikāya* 35:28, *Ādittapariyāya Sutta, PTSS4* pp.19–20.
7. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 21:102–8, *PTSV* pp.665–66, *PPVM* p.694.

yogī, **yogin** (S/H/Pu) (fem. *yoginī*), **jogī**, **jogin** (H/Pu), **rnal 'byor pa** (T) *Lit.* a person who practises one of the many forms of *yoga;* hence, *rāja yogī, haṭha yogī, karma yogī, bhakti yogī, etc.;* a practitioner of any of the traditional forms of Indian *yoga* whose goal is the realization of *Brahman,* the absolute Reality described by the *Upanishads* and other Hindu sacred texts; the traditional Indian holy man, sometimes used more or less synonymously with the Arabic, Persian, and Urdu *faqīr;* a practitioner of tantric (Tibetan) Buddhism, especially one who practises extended periods of meditation and tantric ritual while secluded in a cave or other isolated place. In tantric Buddhism, a *yoginī* is also a *ḍākinī* (celestial being), often depicted in *maṇḍalas,* who guides the practitioner in the acquisition of miraculous powers.

The traditional practice of *yoga* includes a high moral and ethical code. Together with a high degree of honesty and integrity, this involves either celibacy *(brahmacharya)* or at least self-control within the context of marriage. *Brahmacharya* encompasses not only shunning the sexual act, but also all forms of related thought and activity, such as flirting with the opposite sex, sexual attraction, lustful imaginings and fantasies, and so on.[1]

The classic Hindu text, the *Bhagavad Gītā,* which forms a part of the *Mahābhārata,* describes the true *yogī* as one who is detached from the world:

> That *yogī* whose spirit has attained contentment
> through wisdom and experience,
> who is imperturbable and has conquered his senses,
> to whom a lump of earth and a gold bar are alike –
> He can be said to have attained steadiness in *yoga.*
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 6:8*

At the same time, the *yogī* works steadfastly within himself towards the spiritual goal:

> The *yogī* who strives earnestly is cleansed of all his sins,
> and attains perfection after several births.
> In the end, he reaches the highest state.

> A *yogī* is superior to one who practises austerities,
> superior to a learned man,
> and superior to a devoutly religious man.
> Therefore, O Arjuna, become a *yogī.*
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 6:45–46*

He seeks the spirit or soul, the real self, within himself:

> Those *yogīs* who strive
> perceive the self *(ātman)* dwelling within themselves;
> But not so the impure and devotionless,
> even though they may strive.
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 15:11*

Ultimately, the *yogī* experiences the supreme bliss of *Brahman,* the absolute Reality:

> Supreme bliss wells up in a *yogī* whose mind is peaceful,
> whose passions have been conquered, who is free from impurities,
> and who has become *Brahman.*

> Thus, with his mind always steady in spiritual communion,
> and with all mental impurities removed,
> the *yogī* naturally experiences the intense bliss of union with *Brahman.*
>
> *Bhagavad Gītā 6:27–28*

In the various yogic texts, *yogīs* are generally described according to the aspirations of the writer and the form of *yoga* being advocated. Commonest among these texts are those concerning *prāṇāyāma* and *haṭha yoga,* which comprise the *ashṭānga yoga* of Patañjali. The *Yoga-Bhāshya,* the oldest extant commentary on Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras,* defines four stages in the spiritual progress of such a *yogin:*

> There are four degrees of *yogin: prathama-kalpika* (initial phase), *madhu-bhūmika* (honeyed stage), *prajñā-jyotis* (light of wisdom), and *atikrānta-bhāvanīya* (transcendence about to be manifested). Of these, the first is the practitioner *(abhyāsin)* for whom light is just beginning. The second has the Truth-bearing insight. The third is he who has subjugated the elements and the organs, and who has provided the means for keeping all that has been cultivated and is yet to be cultivated, and who has the means of attainment, and so forth for what has been done and is yet to be done. But the fourth, who has passed beyond that which may be cultivated, has as his sole aim the resolving of the consciousness (into its primary Cause). His enlightenment is reached in seven stages, as he advances to the highest *(samādhi).*
>
> *Yoga-Bhāshya, on Yoga Sūtras 3:51; cf. YSPB p.285*

Using the language of the *Yoga Sūtras,* the first is at the early stages of practice;[2] the second has come to understand something of the nature of Truth or Reality;[3] the third has attained a high degree of self-mastery over the body and its senses, and has commenced the practice of yogic meditation in all earnestness for the cultivation of inner perfection and the attainment of the highest consciousness;[4] and the fourth is well advanced upon the seven-stage way to enlightenment and the highest absorption *(samādhi).*[5]

The *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad* also indicates that the means by which the *yogī* attains the realization of *Brahman* is the practice of *yoga:*

> Regulating the *prāṇa,* controlling movement,
> his breathing light, and breathing out through the nostrils,
> a wise man *(vidvān),* without distraction, keeps a hold on his mind,
> just as he would unruly horses yoked to a chariot. . . .
>
> Lightness, good health, steadiness, a clear complexion,
> a sweet voice, a pleasant odour, and minimal excretions –
> These are the first signs of progress in *yoga.*
>
> As a dirt-covered mirror, when cleansed, shines by its own brightness,
> so does the embodied one, on seeing the reality of the Self *(Ātman),*
> become one with It, attain the goal, and become free from suffering.

> When, through awareness of the reality of the Self,
> he beholds, as by a lamp, the nature of *Brahman,* then –
> knowing the Divine as unborn, unchanging,
> and free from all qualities – he is freed from all bondage.
>
> *Shvetāshvatara Upanishad 2:9, 13–15*

Other texts contain variations on the same theme. The *Kshurikā Upanishad* advises that the *yogin* should control and purify the many *nāḍīs* (channels of *prāṇa*), and by means of *prāṇāyāma* and the mystic *Aum* (the creative Sound or *Nāda*), ascend through the central spinal *nāḍī* of *sushumṇā,* "burn all his *karmas*", "cross (the ocean of) birth and death", and at the hour of extinction *(nirvāṇa kāla)* reach the "deathless state".[6] The *Trishikhi-Brāhmaṇa Upanishad* likewise advocates the practice of *prāṇāyāma:*

> The *yogin* who has controlled his subtle life energies *(vāyu)* and vanquished his senses becomes an accomplished adept. He will become temperate in food, with a little sleep, lustrous and full of energy, and will attain longevity, having overcome unnatural death. . . .
>
> All the mental activity of the meditating *yogin* comes to an end. . . . He who meditates on that indestructible matter shining with divine grace in the centre of the heart, on that ultimate Truth, . . . on that Sun who is the very essence of immeasurable and unending wisdom, on that Being who shines like a lamp in a windless place, on that Being who shines like uncut gems – he has salvation within his grasp. . . .
>
> He who has attained realization that the true state of *samādhi* (absorption) is union of the *jīvātman* (living soul, incarnate soul) with *Paramātman* (God), that "I alone am the transcendent *Brahman,*" "I am *Brahman*"[7] – he becomes *Brahman,* and returns no more to worldly existence.
>
> *Trishikhi-Brāhmaṇa Upanishad 102–4, 155–61; cf. YU pp.106–7, 114–15*

Speaking of the rise of the *kuṇḍalinī* (current of *prāṇa*), the *Advaya-Tāraka Upanishad* says that the practitioner of *yoga* will see "radiant beams, sparkling like molten gold", arising from the "(inner) sky *(vyoman)*", and "by seeing such beams he will become a *yogin.*" Thereafter, "casting the eyes intently on the opening *(bila)* between the two eyebrows", he should meditate upon "a great beam of radiance above the root of the palate".[8]

Amṛita-Nāda Upanishad counsels that "the *yogin* should always avoid fear, anger, sloth, too much slumber, too much vigil, too much food and fasting."[9] The *Nādabindu Upanishad* speaks of the inner sound of the mystic *Aum,* the creative power, to which the advanced *yogī* should pay attention once he has risen above the *chakras* (subtle energy centres) of the body:

Sitting firmly in the cross-legged posture *(siddhāsana),*
the *yogī* should adopt the yogic pose of the devotee *(vaishṇavī mudrā),*
and listen fixedly to the Sound *(Nāda)* from within,
that comes from the right side (*lit.* right ear).

This practice of (listening to) the inner Sound *(Nāda)*
makes him deaf to external sounds.
Overcoming all obstacles,
he will enter *turīya pāda* (*i.e.* superconsciousness) within fifteen days.

Nādabindu Upanishad 31–32

Shankara says that the realized *yogī* perceives the Divine in everything:

Through the eye of knowledge *(jñāna-chakshu),* the *yogī* of perfect realization sees the entire universe in his own Self, seeing everything as the Self and nothing else.

Shankara, Ātmabodha 47; cf. SKS p.204

And the *Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā* says that the *yogī*'s body becomes free from disease:

The *yogī* who drinks the pure stream of nectar *(jala)* . . . is freed from disease, attains longevity, and has a body as soft and beautiful as a lotus stem.

Haṭha Yoga Pradīpikā 3:51; cf. HYPM p.325

A yogic text, the *Shiva Saṃhitā,* again an exposition of *haṭha yoga* and *prāṇāyāma,* defines a *yogī* as someone who sees the universal Spirit in his own spirit, and has understood that the body is a microcosm containing all parts of the creation. The writer is talking here of the *chakras* and other aspects of the subtle body, which function as 'gateways' to the subtle and higher realms:

Having renounced all illusory desires and abandoned all illusory worldly chains, the *yogī,* through the (supreme) Self, surely sees the universal Spirit in his own spirit. Having seen, with the help of the Self, his own spirit in the Spirit that brings forth happiness, he forgets this universe, and enjoys the ineffable bliss of *samādhi.* . . .

All beings that exist in the three worlds are also to be found in the body; surrounding the *Meru* (the spinal column), they are engaged in their respective functions. He who knows all this is a *yogī;* there is no doubt about it.

Shiva Saṃhitā 1:62–63, 2:4–5; cf. SSV pp.9–10, 16

The *Shiva Saṃhitā* also describes some of the other characteristics of a *yogī:*

> The following qualities are surely always found in the bodies of every *yogī:* strong appetite, good digestion, cheerfulness, handsome figure, great courage, mighty enthusiasm, and full strength.... Let the *yogī* destroy the multitude of *karmas* by the *Praṇava Aum.*
>
> *Shiva Saṃhitā 3:31, 62, SSV pp.28, 34*

Such a *yogī,* continues the same text, can be a renunciate or a householder:

> He who, while living in this physical body, does not practise *yoga,* is living merely for the sake of sensual enjoyment.
>
> From the time he begins until the time he gains perfect mastery, let the *yogī* eat moderately and abstemiously, otherwise, however clever he may be, he cannot be successful.
>
> The wise *yogī* in an assembly should utter words of the highest good, but should not talk much; he should eat only enough to maintain his physical frame; let him renounce the company of men, let him renounce all company: otherwise he cannot attain *mukti* (salvation); verily, I am telling you the truth.
>
> Let him practise this in secrecy, free from the company of men, in a secluded place. For the sake of appearances, he should remain in society, but should not have his heart in it. He should not renounce the duties of his profession, caste, or rank; but let him perform these merely as an instrument of the Lord, without any thought of the event. There is no sin in doing this.
>
> Even a householder *(gṛihastha),* by wisely following this method, can obtain success, there is no doubt about it. Remaining in the midst of his family, always carrying out the duties of a householder, he who is free from merits and demerits and has restrained his senses, attains salvation. The householder who practises *yoga* is not touched by sin; and if he sins in order to protect human beings, he is not polluted by it.
>
> *Shiva Saṃhitā 5:182–187; cf. SSV pp.82–83*

By the practice of *yoga,* the *yogī* will obtain transcendent knowledge or wisdom, also called gnosis:

> He is a *yogī,* he is a true devotee, he is worshipped in all the worlds, who contemplates upon the *jīvātman* (incarnate soul) and the *Paramātman* as being united to each other as 'I' and 'am'; and who renounces 'I' and 'thou' and contemplates the Indivisible *(Akhanda).* The *yogī,* free from all attachment, takes refuge in that contemplation in which, through the knowledge of superimposition and negation, all is dissolved....

> The *yogī,* free from all attachment, constantly exerts himself in keeping up the practice that leads to gnosis *(jñāna),* so that he may no longer be subject to the upheavals of ignorance.
>
> The wise one, by restraining all his senses from their objects and by being free from all company, remains in the midst of these things, as if in deep sleep (*i.e.* he takes no account of them, they do not affect him)....
>
> That gnosis from which mind and speech turn away in bewilderment can only be obtained through practice; then this pure gnosis will burst forth of itself.
>
> *Shiva Saṃhitā 5:174, 177–78, 180; cf. SSV pp.81–82*

Although the *yogī* is often understood as a practitioner of *rāja yoga,* it is not always so. Practitioners of *karma yoga, bhakti yoga,* and other *yogas* are also known as *yogīs.* Sometimes, the term is used in a general sense for the practitioner of any spiritual path. The Indian *sant* Tulsīdās speaks of *yogīs* who are attached to the creative power, the mystic Name *(Nām)* of the Absolute *(Brahma):*

> *Yogīs* who are full of dispassion and are wholly detached from God's creation keep awake, reciting the Name *(Nām)* with their tongue, and enjoy the bliss of *Brahma,* which is incomparable, unspeakable, unmixed with sorrow, and devoid of name and form.
>
> *Tulsīdās, Rām Charit Mānas 1:21.1; cf. RCML p.31*

Tantric Buddhist texts follow a similar pattern to their Indian counterparts, albeit with a Buddhist flavour. Thus, the Sanskrit *Sekoddesha* instructs the *yogin* to meditate upon the "void *(shūnyatā)*", further advising him to control the flow of *prāṇa,* "arresting the body, speech, and mind in the three channels". As in Indian *prāṇāyāma,* the three channels described are the three main *nāḍīs* that flow along the spine, portrayed in the *Sekoddesha* as the "moon, sun, and *Rahu* above", which have reflections or correspondences with the five elements and other aspects of the physical body below. In Indian terminology, the two channels *iḍā* and *pingalā* are commonly referred to as the moon and sun.[10]

The well-known Tibetan Buddhist *lama* and reformer Je Tsong Khapa (1357–1419), credited with being the founder of the *Geluk* school, writes:

> *Yogins (rnal 'byor pa)* open the eye of wisdom, and defeat the enemy of the afflictions with the weapon of wisdom. They are fearless; they do not shut their eyes like cowards.
>
> *Je Tsong Khapa, Stages of the Path 25, GTE3 p.334*

Modern Buddhist teacher Khenpo Chöga in a commentary on the Tibetan text, the *Bodhisattva-Charyāvatāra,* comments at length concerning the qualities of a true *yogin (rnal 'byor pa):*

> Tulku Urgyen commented that you might be falsely blamed for something terrible. You might be accused of something bad you did not do or say. A *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* does not respond to accusation by saying, "I didn't do it." He does not retaliate by accusing others. When anger or aggression comes at him, he never answers with aggression. However harsh the words may be, however bold the aggressor, the *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* does not get upset. Even if physically attacked and beaten, a *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* never hits back; he sits still, taking the beating silently. As long as the *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* is on the path, he is not free from defects. So, when someone exposes his faults, he does not become upset or defensive. He might say, "What you observe is true. I am at fault."
>
> *Khenpo Chöga, On Bodhisattva-Charyāvatāra 299, DNK1 p.530*

> A *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)*... is no longer counted as an ordinary human. Milarepa said, "When I look at people, I think they are crazy; when people look at me, they think I am crazy." By not maintaining ordinary relationships, the *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* chooses to leave the community of human beings. A true *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* does not follow the social conventions of human beings. Ordinary human beings commit many wicked deeds trying to protect their families and fighting with their enemies.
>
> A *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* who maintains social ties with ordinary worldly beings must adjust to their thoughts and behaviour. Ordinary beings are completely in the thrall of the five afflictions, the five mind poisons, such as desire, aversion, ignorance, arrogance, and jealousy. Following social patterns based on these five poisons would lead the *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* to forsake genuine *dharma* practice, preventing the attainment of complete enlightenment in this lifetime....
>
> A true *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* has abandoned all concepts of pure and impure. He would eat with dogs. Not becoming happier if treated nicely, a *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* also does not become depressed if he is ignored. Like a stray street dog, he is an object for neither praise nor blame. He keeps a low profile, wears ragged clothes, begs for food, and has no interest in being well thought of. Worldly success, fine clothes, sumptuous food and good repute he would consider as defects. He is beyond hope and fear, having attained the view of equanimity. He stays hidden from people. If praised, he is not elated, and if blamed he is not depressed. Such a *yogin* knows that fame and

honour are stains of *Māra.* Other people do not even notice his existence. Nobody would expect anything from such a *yogin (rnal 'byor pa),* nor would he expect anything from anybody else. He remains a hidden *yogin (rnal 'byor pa).*...

Such a *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* has given up all attachment to the eight worldly concerns. Despite a human body, his mind is enlightened, and thus he has reached the company of the gods. Ordinary beings are involved in the eight worldly concerns and, by virtue of this involvement, they have joined the company of demons. A *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* has only one aim in life – to attain perfect enlightenment. To realize this aim, he practises tirelessly day and night. Only practising the divine *Dharma,* he has reached the seat of practice. The phrase "having attained the company of the gods" means that the *yogin* is totally immersed in *dharma* practice....

Die alone in a cave, a ravine, on a mountain ridge, or other places where a genuine *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* would die. The place where a *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* dies has not been built upon; it does not require maintenance or ownership. A *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* is free from worries like, "What will happen to my body when I die? What will happen to my wealth when I die? To whom should I give my property?" No one gives anything to the *yogin (rnal 'byor pa),* and no one takes anything from him. He is completely free and independent.

The time of death is the most important moment of life, and at that time independence is crucial; any attachment or worry could spoil it. If you die surrounded by your friends and family, they will only cause distraction at the moment of death. Alone in a little retreat hut or cave, you will easily remember the instructions of your kind root guru about what to do at the moment of death. No one will be there to cause any distractions, such as doctors or relatives who fuss over your body.

Even though a *yogin (rnal 'byor pa)* cannot totally leave everything behind and go to the mountains, he should still try to cut all his attachments to this life. The main point is to cut through all attachment and clinging.

Khenpo Chöga, On Bodhisattva-Charyāvatāra 214, DNK1 pp.446–50

Describing himself as a *yogī (rnal 'byor pa),* Je Tsong Khapa details a number of the beliefs and practices characterizing such a *yogī.* Among these are included

proper devotion in thought and action to your sublime teacher who shows you the path. Thus you should please your teacher by offering your practice of exactly what he or she says, which you would not forsake even at the cost of your life. I, the *yogī (rnal 'byor pa),* have

> practised just that. You who also seek liberation, please cultivate yourself in the same way.
>
> This human existence . . . is far more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel. Obtained just this once, it is difficult to acquire and easily lost, like lightning in the sky. Considering how (easily this can happen at any time), and realizing that all worldly activities are like chaff, you must try to extract its essence at all times, day and night. I, the *yogī (rnal 'byor pa),* have practised just that. You who also seek liberation, please cultivate yourself in the same way. . . .
>
> Meditative concentration is the king wielding power over the mind. If you fix it, it remains there, immovable like a mighty Mount Meru. . . . It leads to the great exhilarating bliss of your body and mind. . . . Knowing this, *yogīs (rnal 'byor pa)* who are proficient have devoted themselves continuously to single-pointed concentration, which overcomes the enemy of mental wandering. I, the *yogī (rnal 'byor pa),* have practised just that. You who also seek liberation, please cultivate yourself in the same way.
>
> *Je Tsong Khapa, Lines of Experience 9–10, 19; cf. IPEC pp.181, 184*

Adding to the list of good qualities and attributes, Je Tsong Khapa also includes: steadfastness to one's vows in order to avoid being reborn in "one of the three unfortunate realms"; discrimination between good and bad *karma;* the cultivation of all the good qualities and the clearing of old karmic debts; consideration of the origins of suffering and the means of escape from "this vicious circle" by means of detachment and renunciation; continual reinforcement of the vows concerning compassion towards all sentient beings and the struggle for enlightenment and as the "central axle of the *Mahāyāna* path"; generosity towards all sentient beings as the "best weapon for cutting the knot of miserliness"; "ethical discipline", which is "the water that washes away the stains of faulty actions, . . . the ray of moonlight that cools the scorching heat of the defilements", making the practitioner radiant, even in the presence of higher beings; "patience", which is the "high-soaring eagle as the enemy of the snake of anger, and the thickest armour against the weapons of abusive language"; "the armour of resolute and irreversible joyous effort", which "washes away all laziness", and "will make all your actions meaningful, and will bring whatever you undertake to its intended conclusion"; and "profound wisdom", which is the means "to behold profound emptiness, and the path by which to uproot (fundamental ignorance), the source of cyclic existence". Each of these steps ends with the same refrain: "I, the *yogī (rnal 'byor pa),* have practised just that. You who also seek liberation, please cultivate yourself in the same way."[11]

In Jainism, too, the *yogī* is the stereotypical holy man, a man of good, noble and ethical conduct, a seeker of enlightenment, and a practitioner of

meditation, renunciation, and austerities. In short, says Mahāvīra, last of the twenty-four Jain *tīrthankaras* in the current cycle:

> The *yogin* who is indifferent to worldly affairs remains spiritually alert
> to his own duty, namely, his duty towards his soul.
> On the other hand, one who indulges in worldly affairs
> is not dutiful to his soul.
>
> *Mahāvīra, Moksha-pahuḍa 31*

Kundakunda, a revered early medieval Jain teacher, commends the practice of austerities as the means adopted by the highest *yogīs* for transmuting the iron of human nature into the gold of the pure spirit. He is using alchemical imagery:

> Concentration is fire; the pursuits of austerities is said to be the bellows. The soul is the iron. They (the bellows) should be blown by eminent *yogīs.*
>
> *Kundakunda, Samayasāra 233; cf. SSKK p.134*

In another text, he portrays the Jain *yogī* as the seeker of *nirvāṇa* – a state equated with realization of *Paramātman* (the supreme Self, God). This the *yogī* attains through faith, right conduct, right attitude, mystical knowledge or understanding, and meditation, together with the clearing of old *karmas* and preventing the ingress of new ones:

> Faith, knowledge, and conduct – learn these three with the greatest devotion. Knowing these, the *yogīs* soon attain *nirvāṇa.*...
>
> Having bowed to that pure Being of infinite knowledge and vision, I will speak of *Paramātman,* the highest state, attained by the best of *yogīs,* knowing and always experiencing whom the *yogī,* at peace in meditation, attains *nirvāṇa,* a state free from suffering, everlasting and incomparable....
>
> The *yogī* who is indifferent to the body, undistracted, without attachment, without incumbrances, and absorbed in the true Self, attains *nirvāṇa.*... Free from all passions, pride, attachment, aversion, delusion, indifferent to worldly business and poised in meditation, he realizes the self. Relinquishing wrong belief, ignorance, the three kinds of good and bad deed (thought, word, and deed), and keeping a vow of silence, the *yogī,* at peace in meditation, illumines the self.... Stopping the inflow of *karmas* and shedding accumulated ones, the *yogī,* at peace in meditation, knows....
>
> The *yogī* who sleeps where worldly business is concerned is awake to the business of the self; he who is awake to worldly business sleeps where business of the self is concerned. Knowing this,

> the *yogī* completely relinquishes all worldly business, and meditates on *Paramātman,* as described by the best of *Jinas.*...
>
> So long as a man does not know the Self, he indulges in sense gratification: the *yogī,* averse from sense gratification, knows the Self.... Because attachment to non-Self is the cause of mundane existence, therefore the *yogī* always contemplates the Self.
>
> *Kundakunda, Ashṭapāhuḍa 3:40, 6:2–3, 12, 27–28, 30–32, 66, 71; cf. APAK*

Other Jain teachers, such as the eleventh-century Amitagati in his *Yogasāra-Prābhṛita,* reiterate that a *yogī* is one who raises his soul to the level of identity with the supreme Spirit, after attaining freedom from the clutches of *karma.* Employing the same means as those identified by Kundakunda, he is liberated from all attachments, delusions, likes and dislikes, and thus attains *nirvāṇa* and freedom from the cycle of birth and death.[12]

See also: **ashṭānga yoga** (▸3), **yoga** (▸3).

1. *E.g. Agni Purāṇa* 372:9–10.
2. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:12, 18, 32.
3. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:48.
4. *E.g.* Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 1:2, 30–32, 2:47, 3:30, 50.
5. Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtras* 2:27.
6. *E.g. Kshurikā Upanishad* 13–24; cf. *YU* pp.24–26.
7. *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* 1:4.10.
8. *Advaya-Tāraka Upanishad* 6, 11; *cf. YU* pp.3–4, 6.
9. *Amṛita-Nāda Upanishad* 27, *YU* p.14.
10. *Sekoddesha* 27–28, 35–36, in *ALSE* pp.59, 61.
11. Je Tsong Khapa, *Lines of Experience* 11–18, 20, *IPEC* pp.181–84.
12. *E.g.* Amitagati, *Yogasāra-Prābhṛita* 1:38, 52, 59, 5:22, 9:9, 64, *YPAA* pp.40, 47, 52, 120, 212, 235.

yoginī (S/H), **joginī** (H), **jogan** (Pu) A female *yogī;* also, in tantric (Tibetan) Buddhism, a *ḍākinī* (celestial being), often depicted in *maṇḍalas,* who guides the practitioner in the acquisition of miraculous powers. See **yogī**.

yogīshvar(a) (S/H), **yogeshwar** (H) *Lit.* lord *(īshvar)* among *yogīs;* king among *yogīs;* a supreme *yogī;* a spiritually advanced soul; a practitioner of traditional *yoga* who has reached *Brahman,* the absolute Reality described by the *Upanishads* and other Hindu sacred texts; an epithet of Kṛishṇa, Yājñavalkya and others, including *Shiva* as the first *yogī,* also known as *Mahāyogī* and *Mahādeva,* and traditionally believed to have taught *yoga* to humanity.

See also: **yogī**.

yorday ha-merkavah (He) *Lit.* those who descend *(yorday)* to the chariot *(ha-merkavah);* a group of Jewish mystics who lived between *c.*100 BCE–1000 CE, and who described their inner spiritual journey as a descent (or ascent) on a fantastical chariot or *merkavah* that travelled through seven heavenly realms until it reached the realm of the divine throne. Their experiences are described in the *Hekhalot* (sanctuaries or palaces) literature. Sometimes the chariot itself would *become* the throne, on which the vision of God's being would appear. As the chariot journey is a metaphor for the journey within in contemplation, so the throne of God becomes the seat of the soul.

Why the inner journey was often referred to as a descent is uncertain. Perhaps it was out of humility, with the practitioner preparing himself for God's effulgence to flow into him rather than presuming to ascend to God's level, which would have been perceived as arrogance. Another interpretation is derived from a passage in the biblical *Song of Songs:* "I descended to the garden of nuts to see the fruit of the valley and to see whether the vine had blossomed, whether the pomegranates were in flower."[1] In this context, the verse is given a mystical interpretation in which the nut orchard is the realm of higher consciousness and the blossoming of the vine and flowering of the pomegranate are allusions to aspects of inner spiritual progress. But whether the imagery implies an 'ascent' or 'descent', both are metaphors for a 'journey' in consciousness.

See also: **merkavah** (▸3).

1. *Song of Songs* 6:11.

yú, **yúrén**, **hàifēng**, **kuáng**, **tóng** (C) *Lit.* a stupid or ignorant person, a fool *(yú, yúrén);* a madman, a lunatic *(hàifēng);* mad, crazy *(kuáng);* ignorant *(tóng);* a simpleton.

Many masters and adepts, especially those of the *Quánzhēn* school of Daoism, have referred to themselves as 'fools' or 'imbeciles', alluding to the fact that their permanent state of awareness of the all-encompassing *Dào* gives them a different perspective on life.

Those who pursue a spiritual path are frequently perceived as being different from the norm or as flying in the face of conventional standards. This is why they are often called 'mad', 'crazy', 'foolish', and so on:

> (The spiritual person) hides a piece of jade within,
> but externally he is a wild man *(kuáng).*
>
> *Lónghǔ jīng 28; cf. HYY p.129*

Lǎozǐ was clearly quite conscious of widespread ignorance of the spiritual. In the *Dàodé jīng,* he compares various examples of this ignorance to his own deep understanding. He ends the chapter by ironically calling himself ignorant, because this is how most other people see him:

> People chase after excitement
> and look for honours as if they were at a royal feast.
> They seek the constant thrill of experiences,
> like climbing a high tower on a spring day.
>
> In governing my life and nurturing my root of life,
> I alone am afraid of the mind being stirred up.
> I would rather keep my mind like a foetus being formed,
> not expecting to go anywhere.
>
> People all feel they have a great deal to spend and enjoy,
> but I am inadequate to join in the search for fun.
> My mind is like that of a fool *(yúrén),*
> who makes no response to any kind of excitement.
>
> People seem to be bright and sharp,
> and I appear to be dull *(hūn).*
> People enjoy being in the spotlight and receiving attention,
> but I would rather remain unnoticeable
> and embrace my whole being in one piece.
> Like the flow of the ocean,
> there is no end to my journey.
>
> People all have something to rely on:
> I alone seem witless *(wán),*
> I alone am different *(bǐ).*
> I enjoy the support of the subtle path.
>
> *Lǎozǐ, Dàodé jīng 20, ETTC pp.46–47*

A spiritually enlightened person may go about in the world appearing to be a 'nobody' and seeming to own nothing; yet he hides within himself an invaluable inner spiritual wealth – greater than any worldly treasure. Though outwardly appearing to be a simpleton or fool, within himself he hides true understanding,

> like the man who "wears rough-hewn clothes, but cherishes a piece of jade in his bosom," and outwardly behaves like a fool *(kuáng).*
>
> *Cāntóng qì 7, SUTP p.79*

In one of his works, nineteenth-century Daoist master Liú Yīmíng quotes an earlier Daoist classic:

> The great sage appears ignorant *(yú);*
> The great adept seems inept *(zhuō).*
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ATC p.33*

The first four characters of this short quotation are *dà zhì ruò yú,* a Chinese maxim meaning 'great intelligence may appear to be stupidity'; the second four characters are *dà qiǎo ruò zhuō,* another Chinese adage meaning 'great skill seems clumsy'. Both are very old – the latter together with a variation on the former are already found in the *Dàodé jīng* (*c.*600 BCE).[1]

Elsewhere in his writings, Liú Yīmíng alludes to these ancient maxims:

> Do not use intellectual brilliance *(cōngming).*
> If you have talent, do not employ it:
> always be as if inept *(zhuō);*
> If you have knowledge, hide it,
> appearing to be ignorant *(yú).*
> *Liú Yīmíng, Jīndān sìbǎizì jiě, TCC2 p.254*

It is said that Yán Huí, favourite disciple of Kǒngfūzǐ (Confucius), having learnt the art of contentment, rid his mind of conceptual thinking, and unconcerned over what others might think of him, sat "like a simpleton *(yú)*" in meditation ("sitting and forgetting"):

> Yán Huí had learned Confucius' way of satisfaction with the celestial design, knowledge of destiny *(lètiān zhīmìng),* and freedom from anxiety. Therefore nothing affected his happiness. So he was like a simpleton *(yú),* practising psychological fasting *(xīn zhāi),* sitting and forgetting *(zuòwàng),* getting rid of idle intellectualism *(cōngming),* nearly becoming empty repeatedly *(kōng).* This . . . is the marvel of spiritual alchemy *(jīndān).*
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, BBH p.42*

When twelfth-century Daoist master Wáng Zhé decided to pursue the spiritual path, he gave up his job without any warning. The local villagers called him *'hàifēng',* which, in those days, was a word for a madman or lunatic. This was partly because he was going against the 'norm', but also because he sometimes behaved eccentrically. He would sing and dance in public and utter strange words that people took to be the ravings of a madman. His conduct became so unusual that he was given the nickname of *hàifēng*.[2]

By the time he had founded the *Quánzhēn* school of Daoism, his close

disciples had adopted terms like 'lunatic' and 'fool' for themselves. It is not uncommon for masters and advanced adepts – in their humility, and knowing how ordinary people view the spiritually inclined – to refer to themselves as lunatics and fools, as did thirteenth-century Daoist master Yǐn Zhìpíng when he records a surge of spiritual energy *(qì)* during meditation ("stillness"):

> This fool *(yú)* one day while in stillness *(jìng)* felt a stage of *qì*.
>
> *Yǐn Zhìpíng, Qīnghé zhēnrén běiyóu yǔlù 3:11b, TPEQ p.110*

Twelfth-century Daoist master Mǎ Yù, another disciple of Wáng Zhé, describes in a poem of lament how he lived for two years in a hut near his master's grave. Referring to himself as a "fool" and to his master as a "lunatic", Mǎ Yù stresses how he has been trying his utmost to follow his master's instructions. Yet he feels that he is still a long way from repaying his master for having accepted him as a disciple and for having given him the gift of spiritual instruction – two things he clearly values highly:

> Even though I have no fire in the winter,
> I embrace the primal *yáng (yuán qì).*
> In summer, I cut myself off from the clear spring water,
> but I drink the jade juice *(yù jiāng).*
>
> Wax candles I do not burn,
> but I make bright *(míng)* the candle of my (real) nature *(xìng).*
> Garoo-wood incense *(xiāng)* I have no use for,
> since I can burn my heart's incense (sincerity of will and devotion).
>
> Three years barefoot: my vow of three years.
> My one aspiration *(zhì)* is toward the blue skies (*qīng xiāo; i.e.* heaven),
> and this one aspiration grows.
> (Yet) the mountain fool *(tóng),* who keeps mourning,
> is in his hut *(huándǔ):*
> He still has done nothing to repay the lunatic *(hàifēng)* Wáng (Zhé).
>
> *Mǎ Yù, Jiānwù jí 2:21b, TPEQ pp.41–42*

Though his growing desire is to be in the inner spiritual realms, Mǎ Yù laments that he is still "in his hut", and that "he still has done nothing to repay" his master – that he is still in his body and has yet to ascend to spiritual realms.

"The wise" or spiritually aware go about without the need for contriving *(wúwéi)* or trying to make things happen. They are fully aware of the oneness of everything and understand that there is a higher and guiding Intelligence behind everything. But of this the spiritually unaware are ignorant, and so remain entangled in the mundane:

The wise are non-active *(wúwéi),*
while the ignorant *(yúrén)* bind themselves up *(zì fù).*
Sēngcàn, Xìnxīn míng, MZBS p.79

1. Lǎozǐ, *Dàodé jīng* 45.
2. Wáng Zhé, *Chóngyáng quánzhēn jí* 2:7a, *TPEQ* p.127.

yǔrén (C) *Lit.* feather *(yǔ)* person *(rén);* in some older Daoist writings, a metaphorical synonym for *xiān* (immortal). See **xiān**.

ẓaddik (He) (pl. *ẓaddikim*) *Lit.* the righteous, the righteous one; a righteous or virtuous person; from the noun *ẓedek* (virtue, righteousness); used for one who is virtuous in a moral or ethical sense, as well as for a holy man or mystic; also as *moreh ha-ẓedek* (teacher of righteousness, teacher of virtue), a term used in the Dead Sea Scrolls and (it is hence presumed) by the community who lived in the settlement at Khirbet Qumran, *c.*200 BCE – 100 CE, where the scrolls were found.

Ẓaddik and *ẓaddikim* (the righteous ones) are common terms in biblical texts, as well as in later Jewish mystical movements. The *ẓaddik* is generally a prophet or spiritual teacher, while the *ẓaddikim* are those following a spiritual way of life. The first biblical use of *ẓaddik* is in *Genesis:*

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. . . . Noah was a righteous man *(ish ẓaddik)* and born perfect; and Noah walked with God.
Genesis 6:8–9; cf. JB, KJV

It is used in *Psalms:*

But let all those who put their trust in You rejoice;
Let them always shout for joy, because You defend them;
Let those who love Your name be joyful in You.
For You, Lord, will bless the righteous *(ẓaddik);*
with favour You will cover him as with a shield.
Psalms 5:12–13, JCL

A little that a righteous man *(ẓaddik)* has
is better than the riches of many wicked men.
For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
but the Lord upholds the righteous *(ẓaddikim).*
The wicked borrows, and does not pay back;
but the righteous man *(ẓaddik)* gives with good lovingkindness. . . .

> I have been young, and I am now old,
> yet have I not seen the righteous *(ẓaddik)* forsaken,
> nor his seed begging bread.
>
> *Psalms 37:16–17, 21, 25, JCL*

> And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God,
> for they shall wisely consider of His doing.
> The righteous man *(ẓaddik)* shall be glad in the Lord,
> and shall trust in Him,
> and all the upright in heart shall glory.
>
> *Psalms 64:10–11, JCL*

And in *Proverbs:*

> The fruit of the righteous *(ẓaddik)* is a tree of life;
> and he who wins souls is wise *(ḥakham).*
>
> *Proverbs 11:30, JCL*

Proverbs also says: "The *ẓaddik* is the foundation *(yesod)* of the world *('olam).*"[1] Metaphorically, he is the central pillar linking heaven and earth – the *axis mundi* – the axis of the world. He is the sacred centre. He stands between both spiritual and physical realms, connecting them to each other; he is a conduit for the spiritual energy to reach into creation. Symbolically, he is the ladder of Jacob's dream on which the angels ascend and descend from heaven.[2] Hence, the *ẓaddik* is himself the ladder, and spirituality comes into this world through him. It was also believed in Judaism that the prayers of the devoted rise to God by virtue of the *ẓaddik*'s intervention.

Alluding to *Proverbs,* the *Zohar* recounts a fable concerning the significance of the *ẓaddik,* in which the patriarch Abraham is described as the 'foundation of the world':

> For when God first created the world, it was unstable and rocked to and fro. Said God to the world, "Why are you rocking?" It answered, "Sovereign of the universe, I cannot be firm, because I have no foundation on which to rest." God then said, "Behold, I intend to raise up in you a righteous man *(ẓaddik),* Abraham, who will love Me." Hearing this, the world straightaway became firmly established; therefore it is written: "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth *be-hibar´am* (when they were created),"[3] which by a transposition of letters becomes *be-abraham* (for the sake of Abraham).
>
> *Zohar 1:86b; cf. ZSS1 p.288*

The *Zohar* also relates that the legendary first-century Rabbi Simeon bar Yoḥai (*fl.* late C1st CE) was called *yesod ʿolam* (cornerstone of the world) and hence a *ẓaddik,* since he was considered the channel through which divine blessing entered the world; he sustained the world through his presence. In this sense, he was considered a messiah. The sixteenth-century Rabbi Isaac Luria believed himself to be the incarnation of Rabbi Simeon, and that he too was the messiah and the foundation of the world.

Yesod is also the ninth *sefirah* (emanation, divine quality) in the kabbalist system of the ten *sefirot.* The divine energy or power flows from the higher *sefirah* of *ḥokhmah* (wisdom), through the successive *sefirot* and ultimately to *yesod,* through which it flows to *malkut* (kingdom) – the entry to the physical realms. *Yesod* is thus the channel through which the divine abundance flows to the material plane. By saying that the *ẓaddik* is *yesod ʿolam* (foundation or cornerstone of the world), the kabbalist would understand that the *ẓaddik* is the earthly incarnation of the divine principle symbolized by *yesod;* he is the means by which the divine grace, the spiritual knowledge, flows from God into the world – by which the Divine reaches into human consciousness.

More recently, in the devotional movement known as Hasidism that began in eighteenth-century Poland (in an area that is now in Ukraine), *ẓaddik* was again used for the spiritual teacher. In Hasidism, the *ẓaddik* was often defined as someone who had overcome his negative inclination *(yeẓer ha-raʿ)* and was only influenced by his positive inclination.

Understanding of the nature of the Hasidic *ẓaddik* developed around the spiritual mastership of the Baʿal Shem Tov, the first master in the Hasidic line. The movement that originated with him persisted in Europe until its final communities were destroyed during the Nazi period, when at least half a million *ḥasidim* were murdered. After the war, the majority of survivors moved to Israel or America, where they established communities based upon the ones they had previously known. The spiritual impetus given by the Hasidic masters had a profound influence on the Jewish community, and more than a few Hasidic groups still exist today. *Ḥabad* Hasidism, which began in 1775 in the far west of Russia in what is now Belarus, is the largest Jewish religious group of modern times.

The Baʿal Shem Tov was the living example upon whom all subsequent definitions and descriptions of the *ẓaddik* were based. It was Dov Baer the Maggid (preacher) of Mezherich and Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy, two of his leading disciples, who first articulated the principle of the *ẓaddik,* from the 1760s onward. Drawing on many scriptural, rabbinic and kabbalist sources to explain the concept, their writings were based essentially upon their dynamic living relationship with their own master, the Baʿal Shem Tov. Many later Hasidic masters, who traced their spiritual heritage back to the Baʿal Shem Tov and the Maggid Dov Baer, contributed writings elaborating the importance of the *ẓaddik.* In each Hasidic lineage, there was a single individual

who became the charismatic and spiritual leader of the community. The body of literature that developed in Hasidism concerning the significance of the *ẓaddik* was based directly upon the writers' own experiences with the *ẓaddik* of their time and community. Alluding to the kabbalist interpretation of *yesod,* Maggid Dov Baer writes:

> Now it is known that *yesod* has the power to ascend and draw the divine abundance forth from above, because it includes all. The same is true of the earthly *ẓaddik:* he is the channel who allows the abundance to flow down for his entire generation.
>
> *Dov Baer, The Maggid of Mezherich, in ZAMG p.338*

Yaʿakov Yosef of Polnoy, who recorded the Baʿal Shem Tov's teachings, writes:

> The *ẓaddik* is called the heart of the body, for he is a channel which draws the bounty of life *(shefa)* from the Life of all Life to all the other limbs, which are the people of his generation.
>
> *Toldot Yaʿakov Yosef, TYYY 100a, in ZDZP p.126*

The *ḥasidim* emphasized the importance of submitting oneself to the care and guidance of a *ẓaddik* in order to experience the Divine. By 'joining' oneself to a *ẓaddik,* one could experience God. The *ḥasidim* often used the metaphor of the rungs on a ladder (specifically Jacob's ladder) to describe the levels of spiritual ascent. The Baʿal Shem Tov taught that the *ẓaddik* naturally exists on the highest rung or spiritual level, where his attention is completely immersed in the divine Reality; but he then brings his mind, his attention, down to the lower rungs to communicate with his disciples:

> And this is what was revealed to our father Jacob, a ladder fixed in the earth whose head reached the heavens, which means that even when the *ẓaddik* is fixed in the earth, with the lowly, common people of the earth, among scoffers and gossips and the like, nevertheless his head, his thoughts, reach the heavens, joining his thoughts to his Creator. For the divine Name is before him. In this manner, the angels of the Lord – those who come into this world to do the bidding of the Lord *(i.e.* the *ẓaddikim)* – are called messengers of the Lord, . . . and ascend the (spiritual) ladder.
>
> *Toldot Yaʿakov Yosef, TYYY 100a, in ZDZP p.183*

It was also emphasized that only a living *ẓaddik* can descend to the rung or level of the ordinary man and gather those souls yearning to return to the Lord. Yaʿakov Yosef writes:

> In this world, every day or at certain times, the *ẓaddik* descends from his rung in order to join himself with those lesser in degree; . . . for when he again ascends to his rung, he brings them up as well. But it is only possible for one to ascend with him if he too joins himself to the *ẓaddik*.
>
> *Toldot Yaʿakov Yosef, TYYY 100a, in ZDZP p.176*

Although the physical frame of the *ẓaddik* may be finite and lowly, it is while in the human form that he is able to reach the Divine, which is infinite and lofty. Only the *ẓaddik* can ascend the ladder to heaven, enter the supernal realms, meet the Divine, and bring the divine grace back to earth. The special mission of the *ẓaddik* is summarized by Yaʿakov Yosef, paraphrased by Samuel Dresner:

> Through the *ẓaddik,* the austere loftiness of heaven and the abject lowliness of earth, the transcendence of God and the humanity of man, meet. What seems set apart and unalterably opposed find in him a mediating principle, which brings them together.
>
> *Samuel Dresner, The Zaddik, ZDZP p.124*

For Yaʿakov Yosef, the *ẓaddik* represented a centre point of harmony mediating between these two contrary forces – the physical and the spiritual:

> It is only possible to join together two opposites through a third force. The *ẓaddik* is the foundation of the universe, which is peace, for he joins together two opposites – as when one makes peace between a man and his neighbour.
>
> *Toldot Yaʿakov Yosef, TYYY 99a, 137c, in ZDZP p.124*

In Hasidism, it is understood that there are only two states of being: *yesh* (substance), the manifested creation; and God or nothingness, called *ayin* (nothing, *i.e.* without substance). *Yesh* conceals *ayin,* but *ayin* is the eternal divine Principle that gives life to the material creation.

The *ẓaddik* in Hasidism was understood to embody these two principles. His body is *yesh* – it has substance and is physical – while he actually is *ayin,* without substance. He exists in the divine eternity, in the realm of spirit, and yet he is also manifest in this world.

M. Zelikson, a disciple of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson (1902–1994), the seventh and last *rebbe* of the Ḥabad Hasidism movement, wrote of his *rebbe*'s ability to exist simultaneously on both the divine and human levels. He comments that although the *ẓaddik*'s (the *rebbe*'s) soul is one with the Divine, he lives in this world through the physical body. It is this connection with the Divine that gives him his spiritual power. As a modern observer of the *Ḥabad* movement remarks, quoting Zelikson:

> In the twentieth century, *Ḥabad* Hasidism has provided strong testimony to the idea that the charismatic authority of a *ẓaddik* derives from an unmediated relationship between the Divine and the human: the *ẓaddik* is an "infinite substance *(Ayn-Sof)* garbed in flesh and blood; the *rebbe (ẓaddik)* being an infinite substance *(Ayn-Sof)* clothed in the *rebbe's* body".[4]
>
> *Rachel Elior, Mystical Origins of Hasidism, MOHE p.133*

The *ẓaddik* was viewed as the true interpreter of the *Torah* (the first five books of the Bible), since the power of his devotion, his righteousness, his purity, makes him the vehicle for revelation of the divine will. He has perfected the moral and religious virtues, is humble without a trace of pride, and has thus achieved the state of *devekut* (mystic union). A true *ẓaddik* has no will of his own; his will is the will of God. The teachings of the Hasidic mystic Rabbi Meshullam Feibush reveal how the role of the *ẓaddik* was understood. Miles Krassen explains:

> By definition, the *ẓaddik* is a person who knows God directly. An awareness of God is always present in his mind. It is precisely this affective knowledge of God which eradicates the conventional boundaries between sacred and profane. For the *ẓaddik* has acquired a consciousness in which the presence of God is revealed everywhere.... Consequently, for him, the entire world is *Torah.* All of creation reveals for him the hidden reality of divine presence. Thus the *ẓaddik* is a kind of intermediary between the two poles that are so unalterably separate in ordinary consciousness. The *ẓaddik* is the link between God and creation.... It is through him that God's sustaining energy reaches creation.
>
> *Miles Krassen, Uniter of Heaven and Earth, UHEH p.194*

Rabbi Meshullam taught that since most people are not capable of really worshipping or studying the *Torah,* they have little hope of fulfilling God's will by their own efforts. He believed that man has too much pride, lacking moral virtue and devotion to God. He taught that God sends the *ẓaddik* to help human beings bridge the gap between Himself and their fallen state in the material creation. The *ḥasid* (devotee) needs to bond spiritually with the *ẓaddik* during prayer, and the *ẓaddik's* influence is also necessary for *Torah* study in order to create a sense of intimacy with God. The *ḥasid* can even create a spiritual bond with the *ẓaddik* by visualizing his image in his mind.[5] Faith in the *ẓaddik* is essential for spiritual perfection.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Lyady (1747–1812), first in the Ḥabad lineage of *ḥasidim,* also felt that most people were incapable of the spiritual attainment of a *ẓaddik* – he taught that most people are *beinoni* – in between. The *beinoni*

needs the *ẓaddik* in order to find spiritual fulfilment. They have a pull towards godliness, but have to contend with their animal nature; they focus on overcoming their impulse to sin, but actually need to attach themselves to the *ẓaddik* to experience the Divine. This higher attachment will automatically detach them from their worldly desires and attachments. The true *ẓaddik* has transcended all worldliness and only acts according to God's will.

This teaching is explicitly discussed by the *ẓaddik* Kalonymus Epstein (1753–1825):

> The main thing is to bind oneself to a *ẓaddik* who can elevate and repair the souls of Israel; this is the *ẓaddik* who conforms to the paradigm of the supernal *ẓaddik* (God) who connects all things."
>
> *Kalonymus Epstein, Ma´or va-Shemesh, in MOHE pp.146–47*

The authority of the *ẓaddik* was regarded as higher than that of Jewish religious law and the rabbis. Even God was understood to be subject to his will. In later generations, the *ḥasidim* used the term *medugal be-ḥerut* (outstanding in his freedom) to describe the *ẓaddik.* He was free because of his ability to rise to higher realms and draw down the divine grace *(ḥesed)* for the benefit of the community. He had the kind of freedom that no one else had – he could move between the physical and heavenly worlds and take the souls of his disciples with him.

By virtue of his ascent to heavenly realms, the *ẓaddik* had another kind of freedom also – he was free to interpret the scriptures according to the needs of his disciples, as time and place dictated. He was not subject to rigid traditions of scriptural interpretation that were based on the authority of past teachers and masters. The *ẓaddik'*s authority was his own mystic experience, which manifested outwardly as his magnetic attraction.

People were naturally attracted to him, to his presence, even more than their attraction to his teachings. It was his very being that radiated love, and it was this love that they received from him that enveloped them. It hardly mattered how or what he taught intellectually. It was not his knowledge, but the way he lived his life that gave him spiritual value. A *ḥasid* once recounted:

> I did not go to the Maggid of Mezherich to learn *Torah* from him, but to watch him tie his bootlaces.
>
> *Anon., in MTGS p.344*

The later Hasidic *rebbe,* the *ẓaddik* Naḥman of Bratslav, grandson of the Baʿal Shem Tov, taught that the Divine can only be understood through the *ẓaddik,* as he is the channel given by God to humanity so that they can reach Him. Naḥman believed that the *ẓaddik* truly represented God on earth, and possessed a supernatural power beyond that of normal human beings. The mere presence

of the *ẓaddik* transformed a person. Naḥman provides a vivid description of the mission and power of the *ẓaddik,* whose spiritual influence and protection extends even to those who are not in his immediate company:

> Even those who are remote from the *ẓaddik* receive vitality and illumination from the *ẓaddik.* He shelters them like a tree, which has branches, bark, and foliage, and all draw their sustenance from the tree. Even plants distant from the tree, which do not appear to draw sustenance from the tree, do in fact draw from it. . . . Similarly, the *ẓaddik* has the equivalent of branches, bark, and foliage. . . . And even those who are distant receive vitality from him by (his) sheltering them like a tree.
>
> *Naḥman of Bratslav, Likkutei Moharan 224, in JMT p.240*

In some Hasidic circles, it was taught that several *ẓaddikim* could be alive at the same time, but that there was only one *ẓaddik ha-dor* (supreme *ẓaddik*) at any particular time. The designation *'ẓaddik'* was extended to include all the holy men and teachers of the past, even if it had not been used for them during their lifetimes. Only a few, however, were regarded as a *ẓaddik ha-dor.* The biblical Moses, the rabbis Ḥaninah ben Dosa (C1st CE), Simeon bar Yoḥai, and Isaac Luria (1534–1572) were all considered to have been the *ẓaddik ha-dor* of their time. The Baʿal Shem Tov was also included in this rare and elevated group.

See also: **moreh ha-ẓedek**, **righteous one**, **teacher of righteousness**.

1. *Proverbs* 10:25.
2. *Genesis* 28:10–22.
3. *Genesis* 2:4.
4. M. Zelikson, *Kol Mevaser ve-Omer, KMOZ* pp.32, 48–49.
5. See Miles Krassen, *Uniter of Heaven and Earth, UHEH* pp.195–96.

ẓaddikim nistarim (He) (sg. *ẓaddik nistar*) *Lit.* hidden *(nistarim)* righteous ones *(ẓaddikim);* concealed holy ones; a legendary secret group of thirty-six holy ones in eighteenth-century Europe; also called the *nistarim* (hidden ones) and the *lamed-vav ẓaddikim.* According to *gematria,* a Hebrew form of numerology, the numerical value of the Hebrew letter *lamed* is thirty and of the letter *vav* is six, making thirty-six. Hence, they are often known as the *lamed-vavniks* (the thirty-sixers), *-nik* being a Russian and Yiddish suffix for a 'person who . . .'.

According to legend, at least thirty-six *ẓaddikim nistarim* are living incognito among humanity at all times. Mentioned in the Kabbalah and elsewhere, this widely held belief is founded upon a comment in the Babylonian *Talmud,*

which says that in every generation there are thirty-six holy ones who greet the *Shekhinah* (the divine Presence).[1]

It is said that there must always be all thirty-six of them living at the same time and that, if only one of them were to be missing, the world would end. They are all unknown, not only to each other, but also to themselves. They do not know who they really are, and if by accident one of them discovers his true identity, then he may die, and his place taken by another. Their role is to justify the existence of humanity before God, and to avert disasters among people surrounded by those who would persecute them. Through the holiness of their lives, it may also be presumed that they provide spiritual leaven to the mass of humanity, quietly elevating the spiritual atmosphere of the world.

Some maintain that the legend is based upon the narrative in *Genesis* concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. According to this story, God is intent on destroying Sodom because of the iniquity and depravity of its inhabitants. When Abraham asks God whether He intends to destroy the righteous along with the wicked, He relents, saying:

> If I find in Sodom fifty righteous ones *(ẓaddikim)* within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.
>
> *Genesis 18:26; cf. KJV*

Plucking up courage, Abraham asks God what He will do if there are only forty-five *ẓaddikim.* "Will You destroy all the city for the lack of five?" God replies that He would not. So Abraham bargains his way down in steps of ten until God agrees that he will not destroy the city if only ten *ẓaddikim* can be found there. In the event, however, although the bargain is mentioned no more, it must be presumed that not even ten righteous ones could be found, because Sodom and Gomorrah are both destroyed by a rain of "fire and brimstone (sulphur)". His wife Lot and their two daughters are saved through the intervention of two angels, but – disobeying instructions – Lot's wife looks back and is turned into a pillar of salt.[2]

The teaching of the *ẓaddikim nistarim* is based more on legend than evidence, since there is no documentary evidence to support it:

> The *lamed-vav ẓaddikim* are also called the *nistarim.* In our folk tales, they emerge from their self-imposed concealment and, by the mystic powers which they possess, they succeed in averting the threatened disasters of a people persecuted by the enemies that surround them. They return to their anonymity as soon as their task is accomplished, 'concealing' themselves once again in a Jewish community wherein they are relatively unknown.
>
> The *lamed-vavniks,* scattered as they are throughout the diaspora, have no acquaintance with one another. On very rare occasions, one of

> them is 'discovered' by accident, in which case the secret of their identity must not be disclosed. The *lamed-vavniks* do not themselves know that they are ones of the thirty-six. In fact, tradition has it that should a person claim to be one of the thirty-six, that is proof positive that they are certainly not one. Since the thirty-six are each exemplars of *ʿanavah* (humility), having such a virtue would preclude against one's self-proclamation of being among the special righteous. The thirty-six are simply too humble to believe that they are one of the thirty-six.
>
> *Rabbi Raymond A. Zwerin, The 36 – Who Are They? TSWT*

Echoing the *Genesis* story, variations of the legend say that God preserves the world for the sake of the thirty-six righteous ones, even if the remainder of humanity has degenerated into complete depravity. The legend is taken as an inspiration to every Jew to lead a holy and virtuous life, as if he himself were one of the thirty-six, since nobody knows who they are, not even themselves. Another variation says that one of the thirty-six could be the messiah-in-waiting, but if the world is not yet ready to receive him, then he lives and dies like any other human being. Whether or not such a person realizes that they are the messiah is again a matter of debate.[3]

Some believe that the eighteenth-century Hasidic master Baʿal Shem Tov was the last of the *ẓaddikim nistarim,* and there are unsubstantiated accounts that he inherited many secret manuscripts from them. The legend and its variations make a good story, and it is no surprise that it has found its way into films and popular fiction.

See also: **awtād**, **ẓaddik**.

1. *Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin* 97b, *Sukkah* 45b.
2. *Genesis* 18:27–33, 19:1–28; *cf. KJV.*
3. See "Tzadikim Nistarim," *Wikipedia,* ret. February 2014.

zāhid (A/P) (pl. A/P. *zuhhād,* P. *zāhidān*) *Lit.* an ascetic, a renunciate; one who leads a life of *zuhd* (renunciation); one who seeks God or paradise by renunciation of this world through minimizing needs, the denial of desires, and the endurance of physical hardship as the means of gaining mastery over desires for material pleasures.

Since it is easier to adopt the external lifestyle of an ascetic than to internally renounce the world and all physical desires, the *zāhid* has often been accused of hypocrisy. Hence, the expressions *mutazāhid* (pseudo-ascetic), *zāhid-i khushk* (bogus ascetic) and *zāhid-i ẓāhir-parast* (ascetic in outward appearance) have been used for one who adopts the life of a renunciate, yet inwardly harbours material desires.

Many of the earliest Sufis were ascetics, and it is often said that they took their lead from Christian ascetics of the time. Later Sufis, however, have generally regarded the *zāhid* in a less than favourable light. The usual criticism seems to be that the ascetic is obsessed with himself and with externals, while the Sufi seeks to pass away from himself in internal obsession with love of God. Moreover, while the *zāhid* may be looking forward to the fruits of his renunciation in the pleasures of paradise after death, the Sufi is concerned with neither heaven nor hell, and has his gaze fixed solely upon God, hoping to realize Him during the present life. A number of Sufis have hence compared the *zāhid* with the *ʿābid* (worshipper of externals), the *ʿārif* (gnostic, mystic), and others. The true Sufi is regarded as an *ʿārif:*

> Yaḥyá ibn Muʿādh Rāzī said, "The outward being of the ascetic *(zāhid)* is clean, while his inward being is in disorder. The inward being of the gnostic *(ʿārif)* is pure, while his outward being is in disorder."
>
> *Sulamī, Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah, KTS p.102, in FNI6 p.90, in SSE6 p.72*

> Manṣūr ibn ʿAmmār said, "Wisdom *(Ḥikmat)* speaks in the hearts of gnostics *(ʿārifān)* with the tongue of veracity, in the hearts of ascetics *(zāhidān)* with the tongue of vanity, in the hearts of servants *(bandagān)* with the tongue of divine favour, in the hearts of disciples *(murīdān)* with the tongue of reflection, and in the heart of the aware *(ʿulamā')* with the tongue of remembrance." …
>
> Abū Yazīd said, "The gnostic *(ʿārif)* is concerned with yearning, while the ascetic *(zāhid)* is preoccupied with hunger."
>
> *Sulamī, Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfīyah, KTS pp.135, 74, in FNI6 p.90; cf. in SSE6 p.72*

Abū Yazīd also said, "The gnostic *(ʿārif)* flies, while the ascetic *(zāhid)* walks."[1]

The *zāhid* turns his back on this world, but his mind seeks a place in heaven. For this reason, he is distracted by the pleasures of heaven, and fails to focus his attention on God. The Sufi, on the other hand, looks beyond both this world and the next, seeking only God:

> Ascetics *(zuhhād)* contemplate the beauty of the hereafter by the light of faith and certitude, and view the world as something vile. They suppress the desire to observe its transitory glitter and form, and desire lasting true Beauty. The difference between the ascetics *(zuhhād)* and the *ṣūfīs* is that the ascetics *(zuhhād)* are backward in that they are veiled from God by their indulgence of the *nafs* (lower mind); for heaven is a station related to the gratification of the *nafs.* "And therein is all that the soul desires."[2]
>
> The *ṣūfī,* however, in contemplating the pre-eternal Beauty and lovingkindness of the immortal Essence, is veiled from both the

worlds. Just as he has averted desire from the world, so has he averted it from the hereafter. This is consistent with the prophetic tradition: "That world is forbidden to the people of this world, and both worlds are forbidden to the people of God *(ahl Allāh).*"[3] The *ṣūfī,* therefore, experiences a level of asceticism *(zuhd)* above that of the ascetic *(zāhid),* which does not involve the indulgence of the *nafs* at all.

Maḥmūd Qāshānī, Miṣbāḥ al-Hidāyah wa-Miftāḥ al-Kifāyah, MHK p.116; cf. in SSE6 pp.112–13

Both the ascetic and the one who is involved in external forms of worship fail to see that God is in everything; therefore, they remain in separation from everything. The only way to be at one with all things is to be aware of the divine presence in all things:

The worshippers *('ubbād)* and the ascetics *(zuhhād)*
are alienated from everything
only because of their absence from God in everything.
Had they contemplated Him in everything,
they would not have been alienated from anything.

Ibn 'Aṭā' Illāh, Kitāb al-Ḥikam 12:115; cf. SAKH p.40, BWIC p.75

Ḥāfiẓ also follows the same line of thought. The lover of God and the ascetic represent two different approaches, of which Ḥāfiẓ regards the lover as the higher. His fondness for imagery that depicts the divine lover as a wine-drinking drunkard gives him ample opportunity for comparison with the *zāhid.* Renunciation alone does not fill the soul with divine love:

Attached to self-denial,
the ascetic *(zāhid)* remains immature.
But he becomes mature
when his eye falls upon the wine cup!

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.86, DIH p.175; cf. DHWC (153:4) p.305

The *zāhid* is focused on himself and his ascetic practices, the lover has his attention in God. Were divine love to enter his heart, he would melt in that love:

The ascetic *(zāhid)* is linked with pride and prayer,
I, with intoxication and supplication.
Let us see with which of these two Your favour lies.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.114, DIH p.201; cf. DHWC (190: 6) p.360

O Lord! That self-beholding ascetic *(zāhid)*
sees nothing in himself but imperfection.

Cast into the mirror of his understanding
the smoke of a great sigh (of divine love)!
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.136, DIH p.239; cf. DHWC (307:8) p.533

Not all Sufis have portrayed the followers of *zuhd* (renunciation) in such a negative light. Even so, the *zāhid* is always seen as a stage on the Way, not the end in itself. Al-Ghazālī considers it a natural stage of spiritual development. Firstly, he says, a person repents and relinquishes sensual desires. Then he becomes contented in his state of self-denial – this is the stage of the *zāhid.* Finally, he comes to love those things that please God. Love *(maḥabbah),* says al-Ghazālī, is the highest stage.[4]

See also: **zuhd** (▸3).

1. Abū Yazīd Bisṭāmī, in *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā'* 1, *TAN1* p.165, in *SSE6* p.72.
2. *Qur'ān* 43:71.
3. *Ḥadīth, Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr, JMH2* p.16; Muḥammad ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsā'ī, *al-Mujlī, MMJA* p.296; *Traditions of the Prophet, TPA1* (57) pp.70–71.
4. Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn* 4:2, *RRS* p.149.

ẓemaḥ ẓedek, **ẓemaḥ ẓaddik**, **ẓemaḥ ẓedakah** (He) *Lit.* righteous *(ẓedek)* shoot *(ẓemaḥ);* righteous offshoot; shoot, twig, plant, growth, or seedling of righteousness or virtue; in mystical symbolism, a branch of the Tree of Life, which is understood as either God Himself or as His power in creation; hence, a prophet, a messiah.

The use of *ẓemaḥ ẓedek* as an epithet of a prophet or messiah spans a long period of time. It was used by Jeremiah (C7th BCE) and Zechariah (C6th BCE). Many centuries later, Rabbi Menaḥem Mendel Schneersohn (1789–1866), the third rabbi in the lineage of *Ḥabad* Hasidism, was also known as the Ẓemaḥ Ẓedek.

Biblical texts refer to three types of 'anointed one' or messiah (He. *mashi´aḥ*) – the priest, the king, and the prophet. The epithets *ẓemaḥ* and *ẓemaḥ ẓaddik* are both used in this context for messianic leaders. Jeremiah uses *ẓemaḥ ẓaddik* for a messiah of a royal nature. His prophecy says that a *ẓemaḥ ẓaddik* will come from the lineage of King David. Jeremiah lived at a time when the Jews had been conquered, and many, especially the leaders, nobility, craftsmen and intelligentsia, had been taken to live in exile in Babylon following the Chaldaean conquest of Judah in 597 BCE. He is offering hope that their kingdom will be re-established one day, free from foreign dominion, and ruled by a benign king. Since the Israelite kings were anointed by the prophets and were invested with prophetic or spiritual power, the *ẓemaḥ* could also symbolize the king in his spiritual role:

Behold, days are coming, says the Lord,
when I will raise to David
a righteous offshoot *(ẓemaḥ ẓaddik).*
And he shall reign as a king and prosper,
and shall execute judgment and righteousness on earth.
In his days, Judah shall be saved,
and Israel shall dwell safely:
And this is his name by which he shall be called:
'The Lord our righteousness *(ẓaddik Yahweh)*'.

Jeremiah 23:5–6; cf. JCL

And:

In those days and at that time,
I will cause an offshoot of righteousness *(ẓemaḥ ẓedakah)*
to grow up to David,
and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

Jeremiah 33:15; cf. JCL

A little later in time, the prophet Zechariah, one of those who returned from exile following the fall of Babylon to the Persian king Cyrus the Great in 538 BCE, expresses the same hope:[1]

Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying:
"Behold a man whose name is Ẓemaḥ,
and who shall shoot up out of his place
and build the temple of the Lord;
Even he shall build the temple of the Lord,
and he shall bear the glory,
and shall sit and rule upon his throne;
And there shall be a priest before his throne;
and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

Zechariah 6:12–13; cf. KB

Here, Ẓemaḥ is a royal messiah, who will rebuild the Temple and rule the country from his throne. A priestly messiah will sit near the throne, and the prophetic messiah will sit in the centre between them as "the counsel of peace". Expressing the traditional belief, the passage indicates that the three types of messiah will rule together, with the prophet as counsellor and mediator.

See also: **mateh** (7.3), **mish'an** (▸4), **shevet**.

1. See also *Zechariah* 3:8.

zenji (J), **chánshī** (C) *Lit. Zen* or *Chán* teacher or master; meditation master; an honorific or respectful form of address, originally referring to any *Zen* or *Chán* practitioner, but later used exclusively for teachers and masters who had mastered the practice of *Zen* or *Chán* meditation; reserved in *Sōtō Zen* for the abbots of Eiheiji and Sōjiji, the two main *Sōtō* monasteries and training centres in Japan; commonly appended to the name of a *Zen* teacher, as in Dōgen Zenji (1200–1253), founder of the *Sōtō* school of *Zen,* and Keizan Zenji (1268–1325), fourth in the *Sōtō Zen* lineage and the second of its two great founding influences.

In 706 CE, Zhōngzōng, the fourth Emperor of the *Táng* dynasty, posthumously conferred the name Dàtōng Chánshī ('Greatly Penetrating *Chán* Master') on *Chán* Buddhist patriarch Yùquán Shénxiù (J. Gyokusen Jinshū, *c.*606–706). This was only the second imperial bestowal of the title *Chánshī* in China, the first having taken place some 300 years previously. The first documented bestowal of this type of *Zenji* title by the Japanese court was in 1278 CE, when the Imperial Court posthumously bestowed the title Daikaku Zenji ('Great Awakening *Zen* Master') upon Chinese emigré Lánxī Dàolōng (J. Rankei Dōryū, 1213–1278), first abbot of the Kenchōji monastery of the *Rinzai Zen* tradition.

See also: **rōshi**.

zhēnrén (C) *Lit.* true *(zhēn)* person *(rén);* a real or genuine person; a true man, a real human being; a supreme person, a pure person; synonymous with *shèngrén* (sage, master) and *zhīrén* (perfected person); used in Chinese Buddhism to translate the Sanskrit *arhat* (worthy one, enlightened one).

The *zhēn* in *zhēnrén,* as used in Daoism, equates to the English 'true' or 'genuine', but is more the converse of 'flawed' than of 'false'. While an ordinary person's physical and spiritual state might be flawed and divided, that of the realized *zhēnrén* is flawless and whole.

It is through diligent attention to spiritual practice that a Daoist becomes a *zhēnrén,* whereupon his spirit *(shén)* is free to proceed to spiritual regions:

> When obscurity *(yīn)* is gone
> and illumination *(yáng)* is pure,
> then the work is done;
> The true human *(zhēnrén)* emerges
> and visits the spiritual sky *(shénxiāo).*
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, TCC2 p.471*

The *Zhuāngzǐ* (C4th BCE) describes the *zhēnrén* at great length, where the term is used synonymously with *xiān* (immortal), since the latter did not stabilize in Chinese literature until some time after the writing of the *Zhuāngzǐ.* The *Zhuāngzǐ* also uses *zhēnrén* almost interchangeably with *shénrén* (spiritual person), *zhìrén* (perfected person), and *shèngrén* (sage, wise person) to refer to the ideal *Dào* cultivator who, having attained the *Dào,* becomes immune to earthly desires and dangers:

> What do I mean by a true man *(zhēnrén)?*
>
> The true man *(zhēnrén)* of ancient times did not rebel against want, did not grow proud in plenty, and did not plan his affairs. A man like this could commit an error and not regret it, could meet with success and not make a show. A man like this could climb the high places and not be frightened, could enter the water and not get wet, could enter the fire and not get burned. His knowledge was able to climb all the way up to the Way *(Dào)* like this.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6, CWCT p.77*

Because the *zhēnrén* is unaffected by duality, he is not swayed by either positive or negative experiences. His body and spirit are sustained by the *Dào.* Here, "heaven" is used more or less synonymously with *Dào:*

> The true man *(zhēnrén)* of ancient times slept without dreaming and woke without care; he ate without savouring, and his breath came from deep inside. The true man breathes with his heels (from the depths of his being); the mass of men breathe with their throats (superficially). Crushed and bound down, they gasp out their words as though they were retching. Deep in their passions and desires, they are shallow in the workings of heaven.
>
> The true man *(zhēnrén)* of ancient times knew nothing of loving life *(shēng),* knew nothing of hating death *(sǐ).* He emerged without delight; he went back in without a fuss. He came briskly, he went briskly, and that was all. He didn't forget where he began; he didn't try to find out where he would end. He received something and took pleasure in it; he forgot about it and handed it back again. This is what I call not using the mind *(xīn)* to repel the Way *(Dào),* not using man to help out heaven. This is what I call the true man *(zhēnrén).*
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6, CWCT pp.77–78*

The *zhēnrén* lives harmoniously with others; he behaves naturally, though with dignity; he behaves courteously, but without becoming involved. In these ways, he leads by example:

> This was the true man *(zhēnrén)* of old: his bearing was lofty and did not crumble; he appeared to lack, but accepted nothing; he was dignified in his correctness, but not insistent; he was vast in his emptiness, but not ostentatious. Mild and cheerful, he seemed to be happy; reluctant, he could not help doing certain things; annoyed, he let it show in his face; relaxed, he rested in his virtue *(dé).* Tolerant, he seemed to be part of the world; towering alone, he could be checked by nothing; withdrawn, he seemed to prefer to cut himself off; bemused, he forgot what he was going to say.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6, CWCT p.79*

Therefore:

> His liking was one, and his not liking was one. His being one was one, and his not being one was one. In being one, he was acting as a companion of heaven. In not being one, he was acting as a companion of man. When man and heaven do not defeat each other, then it may be said that we have the true man *(zhēnrén).*
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6; cf. CWCT pp.79–80*

A Daoist adept who has attained the high state of the *zhēnrén* is in harmony with the *Dào.* He blossoms forth naturally from within, reflecting the highest levels of virtue and morality *(dàodé):*

> The heavenly is on the inside, the human is on the outside. Virtue *(dé)* resides in the heavenly. Understand the actions of heaven and man, base yourself upon heaven, take your stand in virtue *(dé),* and then – although you hasten or hold back, bend or stretch – you may return to the essential and speak of the ultimate *(jí).*
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 17, CWCT pp.182–83*

Attuned to the superior *dé* (nature, characteristics, virtue) of the *Dào,* the *zhēnrén* attains the highest degree of knowledge, and can commune with the spiritual while remaining in touch with the human:

> He who knows what it is that heaven *(tiān)* does, and knows what it is that man does, has reached the peak. Knowing what it is that heaven does, he lives with heaven. Knowing what it is that man does, he uses the knowledge of what he knows to help out the knowledge of what he doesn't know, and lives out the years that heaven gave him without being cut off midway – this is the perfection of knowledge *(shèng zhēn).*
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6, CWCT p.77*

The *Zhuāngzǐ* relates the story of a spiritual teacher called Tián Zǐfāng, who often quotes the words of a certain Xī Gōng to the marquis Wén of Wèi. When the marquis asks whether this Xī Gōng is Tián Zǐfāng's master, Tián Zǐfāng tells the marquis that his master is in fact Dōng Guōshùnzǐ. He then goes on to explain why he feels that he is not worthy to quote the words of his own master:

> Zǐfāng replied, "He is a man who satisfies the true *(zhēn)* (ideal of humanity); a man in appearance, but (having the mind of) heaven *(tiān).* Void of any thought of himself, he accommodates himself to others, and nourishes the true ideal that belongs to him. With all his purity, he is forbearing to others. Where they are without the *Dào,* he rectifies his demeanour, so that they understand it, and in consequence their own ideas melt away and disappear. How should one like me be fit to quote his words?"
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 21, TT2 pp.42–43*

The *Wénzǐ* (*c.*200 BCE) also contains a detailed description of the *zhēnrén:*

> The Way *(Dào)* moulds myriad beings, but is ever formless *(wúxíng).* Silent and unmoving, it totally comprehends the undifferentiated unknown. No vastness is great enough to be outside it, no minuteness is small enough to be inside it. It has no house, but gives birth to all the names of the existent and nonexistent *(yǒu wú).*
>
> Real people *(zhēnrén)* embody this through open emptiness, even easiness, clear cleanness, flexible yielding, unadulterated purity, and plain simplicity – not getting mixed up in things. Their perfect virtue *(zhìdé)* is the Way *(Dào)* of heaven and earth, so they are called real people *(zhēnrén).*
>
> Real people *(zhēnrén)* know how to deem the (real) self great and the world small; they esteem self-government and disdain governing others. They do not let things disturb their harmony; they do not let desires derange their feelings. Concealing their names, they hide when the Way *(Dào)* is in effect, and appear when it is not. They act *(wéi)* without contrivance *(wúwéi),* work without striving, and know without intellectualizing.
>
> Cherishing the Way of heaven (*tiāndào,* natural law, heavenly law), embracing the heart of heaven *(tiānxīn),* they breathe darkness *(yīn)* and light *(yáng),* exhaling the old and inhaling the new. They close up together with darkness *(yīn),* and open up together with light *(yáng).* They roll up and roll out together with firmness and flexibility, contract and expand together with darkness *(yīn)* and light *(yáng).* They have the same mind as heaven *(tiān),* the same body as the Way *(Dào).*

> Nothing pleases them, nothing pains them; nothing delights them, nothing angers them. All things are mysteriously *(xuán)* the same; there is neither right nor wrong. . . .
>
> Real people *(zhēnrén)* deliberately return to essence, relying on the support of spirit *(shén),* thus attaining completeness. So they sleep without dreams and awake without worries.
>
> *Wénzǐ 1, WTUM pp.7–8*

For someone striving to become a *zhēnrén,* it is insufficient simply to have knowledge of the right things to do, as instructed by an enlightened teacher. Actually carrying out those instructions is even more important. Even though a person may have an understanding of the "essence of the true thusness" (the naturalness of nature), such that he unconsciously follows the laws of nature, nevertheless it is only by determined spiritual practice ("cultivation of the great medicine") – without allowing any diminution of the spiritual wealth ("transcend to nonleaking") – that a person will actually experience this essence and become a *zhēnrén:*

> Even if you understand the essence of the true thusness *(rú),* you still have not escaped reincarnation *(pāo shēn què rù shēn);* it is better to include cultivation of the great medicine, immediately transcend to nonleaking, and be a real human *(zhēnrén).*
>
> *Zhāng Bóduān, Wùzhēn piān, URC p.153*

When the mind is no longer burdened by unnecessary thoughts and desires, worldly accretions lose their attraction; instead, the realities of the inner spiritual realms become alluring. The mind's power is diminished and its hold over the spirit eases off. The spirit regains its inherent power and becomes free. Now liberated, it can display its natural luminance and ascend without restraint to higher spiritual realms:

> If there is nothing shrouding the spirit *(shén),* and nothing burdening the mind *(xīn),* you are completely clear and thoroughly in tune, peaceful, and unconcerned. Power and profit cannot tempt you, (outer) sound *(shēng)* and form *(sè)* cannot seduce you; speechmakers cannot sway you, intellectuals cannot move you, warriors cannot frighten you. This is the freedom of real people *(zhēnrén).*
>
> *Wénzǐ 3, TCC1 p.184*

The unknown author of a thirteenth-century Daoist treatise says that humanity is "too attached to the dust *(chén)* of the world" to understand the principles and the methods of "cultivating the underlying reality and entering stillness *(xiū zhēn chōng jì)*"; whereas the *zhēnrén* of old not only understood them, but put them into practice:

> From ancient times, the methods have not been spoken of casually; therefore, not many people have attained longevity and immortality. Only the enlightened ones *(zhēnrén)* returned to simplicity *(pǔ)* and purity *(chún),* cultivated clarity *(chéng)* and brilliance *(míng),* and used stillness to hold on to the underlying reality.
>
> The key lies in extinguishing wayward thoughts from the ordinary mind. Realize the true spirit *(shén),* and the void *(xū)* will be the natural outcome. Merge with the formless *(wúxíng),* and you will be able to wander in the three realms *(sānjiè)* of the subtle cavern, penetrate the roots *(gēn)* of life and death, and arrive at the ultimate answer to gain and loss.
>
> This process is known as 'the spirit resonating (*yìng,* echoing)'. There is nothing that the spirit cannot do. When spirit transforms spirit, the spirit will always be within you. The spirit within is the same as the true spirit of the sky and the earth and of all phenomena.
>
> *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn 1:2.1; cf. NEL pp.79–80*

The term *zhēnrén* also became an honorific title for important men of history, particularly for those considered Daoist masters.

See also: **shèng**, **xiān**, **zhìrén**, **zhīrén**.

zhìrén (C) *Lit.* a person *(rén)* who has arrived *(zhì);* in Daoism, a person who has reached perfection through spiritual practice; a complete or perfected or accomplished person.

The *zhìrén* refines his spirit *(shén)* so that he can eventually merge into the *Dào:*

> People who have refined the spirit *(shén)* to merge with the Way *(Dào)* are called perfected humans *(zhìrén).*
>
> *Sīmǎ Chéngzhēn, Zuòwànglùn; cf. TMED p.105*

Having attained spiritual union with the *Dào,* the *zhìrén* is completely sustained by *Dào,* and therefore has no further interest in unnecessary worldly things:

> Spiritually perfected people *(zhìrén)* place little value on what ordinary people esteem.
>
> *Gě Hóng, Bàopǔzǐ nèipiān 2; cf. JEMS p.46*

Through sustained spiritual practice, the *zhìrén* has reached the heights of attainment where he is free from the self and duality. Even while continuing to live in the world, he is permanently at one with *Dào.*

In an anecdote in the *Zhuāngzǐ* (C4th BCE), a teacher called Wáng Ní describes to his questioner Niè Quē how the *zhìrén* remains unaffected by circumstances:

> The perfect man *(zhìrén)* is spirit-like *(shén).* Great lakes might be boiling about him, and he would not feel their heat; the (rivers) Hé and Hàn might be frozen up, and he would not feel the cold; hurrying thunderbolts might split the mountains, and the wind shake the ocean, without being able to make him afraid. Being such, he mounts on the clouds of the air, rides on the sun and moon, and rambles at ease beyond the four seas. Neither death nor life makes any change in him; how much less should the considerations of advantage and injury do so!
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 2; cf. TT1 p.192*

The *zhìrén,* being at one with *Dào,* is in tune with heaven and thus has control over his mind and what comes and goes before it. Because of this control, his mind is more powerful than matter, and he becomes entirely neutral towards the kind of things that may concern others:

> The perfect man *(zhìrén)* employs his mind as a mirror *(jìng).* It grasps nothing, it refuses nothing. It receives, but does not keep. Thus can he triumph over matter without injury to himself.
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 7; cf. CTT p.90*

The *zhìrén* relies fully and unreservedly on the unlimited, all-powerful, eternal *Dào.* Completely in tune with the *Dào,* he embraces nature and its laws, thereby becoming unlimited. Because he lives and acts naturally and spontaneously *(zìrán)* and behaves without contention or contrivance *(wúwéi),* he is untroubled and carefree:

> Perfected people *(zhìrén)* lean on a pillar that is never shaken, travel a road *(tú)* that is never blocked, are endowed from a resource that is never exhausted, and learn from a teacher *(shī)* that never dies. They are successful in whatever they undertake, and arrive wherever they go. Whatever they do, they embrace destiny *(mìng)* and go along without confusion *(huò).* Calamity, fortune, profit, and harm cannot trouble their minds *(xīn).*
>
> *Wénzǐ 3, WTUM p.34*

According to the *Zhuāngzǐ,* a certain Biǎnzǐ, a well-known Daoist master in his time, was sitting with his disciples when he was visited by a villager seeking counsel. Biǎnzǐ listened to the villager's miserable, self-centred story,

and then compared the villager's behaviour to that of a *zhìrén* under similar circumstances. Rebuking the villager, he sends him on his way:

> There was a Sūn Xiū who went to the door of master Biǎn Qìngzǐ, and said to him in a strange perturbed way, "When I lived in my village, no one took notice of me, but all said that I did not cultivate (my fields); in a time of trouble and attack, no one took notice of me, but all said that I had no courage. But that I did not cultivate my fields, was really because I never met with a good year; and that I did not do service for our ruler, was because I did not meet with the suitable opportunity to do so. I have been sent about my business by the villagers, and am driven away by the registrars of the district – what is my crime? O heaven! How is it that I have met with such a fate?"
>
> Biǎnzǐ said to him, "Have you not heard how the perfect man *(zhìrén)* deals with himself? He forgets that he has a liver and gall. He takes no thought of his ears and eyes. He seems lost and aimless beyond the dust and dirt of the world, and enjoys himself at ease in occupations untroubled by the affairs of business. He may be described as acting and yet not relying on what he does, as being superior and yet not using his superiority to exercise any control.
>
> "But now you would make a display of your wisdom to astonish the ignorant; you would cultivate your person to make the inferiority of others more apparent; you seek to shine as if you were carrying the sun and moon in your hands.
>
> "That you are complete in your bodily frame and possess all its nine openings; that you have not met with any calamity in the middle of your course, such as deafness, blindness or lameness, and can still take your place as a man among other men – in all this you are fortunate. What leisure have you to murmur against heaven? Go away, Sir."
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 19, TT2 pp.24–25*

According to the *Zhuāngzǐ,* many people are preoccupied with what others think of them. Being more concerned with how the rest of the world sees or perceives them, they will go to extreme lengths to secure and maintain what they believe to be a 'good reputation'. Nor do they count their blessings; for, despite the many good things in their lives, all they can do is complain of their misfortunes. Ordinary people (the "small man") are generally so entangled in trivial, worldly things, that they are not aware that they are wasting their lives. These "fetters of embodied matter" have shackled them to the mundane, preventing them from learning about spirituality and the *Dào:*

> The wisdom of the small man does not go beyond (the minutiae of) making presents and writing memoranda, wearying his spirits

> *(jīngshén)* in what is trivial and mean. But at the same time, he wishes to aid people by guiding them to (the secret of) the *Dào* and of all things in the incorporeity *(xíngxū)* of the Grand Unity *(Tàiyī).* In this way, he goes all astray in regard to the mysteries of space and time. The fetters *(léi)* of embodied matter keep him from the knowledge of the Grand Beginning *(Tàichū).*
>
> On the other hand, the perfect man *(zhìrén)* directs the energy of his spirit *(jīngshén)* to what was *before* the Beginning, and finds pleasure in the mysteriousness belonging to the region of nothingness. He is like the water that flows on regardless of any obstruction by matter, and expands into the Grand Purity *(Tàiqīng).*
>
> Alas for what you do, O men! You occupy yourselves with things as trivial as a hair, and remain ignorant of the Grand Rest *(Dàníng)!*
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 32; cf. TT2 pp.206–7*

Worldly people are preoccupied with their physical rather than their spiritual health. The *zhìrén,* on the other hand, have no such concerns. Having learned about the true purpose of human life, they devote every waking moment to spiritual practice, so that they may recover their true essence, their true nature. By emptying their mind of all unnecessary worldly thoughts, they open up to an awareness of the *Dào:*

> The learning of complete people *(zhìrén)* is to return their essential nature *(xìng)* to nonbeing *(wú)* and float their minds in spaciousness.
>
> The learning of the worldly eliminates their inherent virtues *(dé)* and shrinks their essential nature *(xìng);* while inwardly worrying about their health, they use violent actions and excess cunning to fuss about name and honour. This is something complete people *(zhìrén)* do not do.
>
> *Wénzǐ 10, TCC1 p.290*

In a story related in the *Zhuāngzǐ,* Kǒngfūzǐ (Confucius) visits Lǎozǐ one day and finds him drying his freshly washed hair in the open air. He notices that Lǎozǐ is standing motionless, looking absentmindedly into the distance. Intrigued, he enquires:

> "I beg to ask about your enjoyment in these thoughts."
>
> Lǎozǐ replied, "The comprehension of this is the most admirable and the most enjoyable (of all acquisitions). The getting of the most admirable, and the exercise of the thoughts in what is the most enjoyable, constitute what we call the perfect man *(zhìrén).*"
>
> Confucius said, "I should like to hear the method of attaining it."
>
> The reply was, "Grass-eating animals do not dislike changing their pastures; creatures born in the water do not dislike changing their

> waters. They make a small change, but do not lose what is the great and regular requirement (of their nature); joy, anger, sadness and delight do not enter into their breasts (in connection with such events). Now the space under the sky is occupied by all things in their unity. When they possess that unity and share it equally, then the four limbs and hundred members of their body are but so much dust and dirt, while death and life, their ending and beginning, are but as the succession of day and night, which cannot disturb their enjoyment; how much less, then, will they be troubled by gains and losses, calamity and happiness!
>
> "Those who renounce the paraphernalia of rank do it as if they were casting away so much mud – they know that they are themselves more honourable than such paraphernalia. The honour belonging to one's self is not lost by any change (of condition). Moreover, a myriad transformations may take place before their ending is reached. What is there in all of this that is sufficient to trouble the mind? Those who have attained to the *Dào* understand this subject."
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 21; cf. TT2 pp.47–48*

When oneness with *Dào* is attained, the *zhìrén* no longer fights against natural forces and events, including birth and death. This means that either he does not meet external obstacles in his path or, on meeting them, he easily overcomes them. Instead, he joyfully passes "through the world of men without leaving any trace of himself."[1]

Daoist adepts are known to mix freely among people despite their inner wisdom and power, but they are encouraged to "hide their light and nurture it in darkness":[2]

> Adept humans *(zhìrén)* do not give rise to thoughts from within and do not take in things from without. They appear to lack what they do in fact have; though fulfilled, they appear empty. They appear to be simpletons *(yú):* they have understanding *(míng)* that they do not employ; they have illumination *(guāng)* that they do not allow to shine.
>
> Such people do not let the artificial *(jiǎ)* damage the real *(zhēn),* do not let externals *(wài)* disturb them inwardly *(nèi).* They only respond to an intuitive sense, only rise when pressed, only act when there is no choice. Though they are outwardly responsive, they remain inwardly unmoved. Though physically active, their minds remain unstirring.
>
> *Liú Yīmíng, Wùdào lù, ATC p.66*

Nevertheless, having themselves become adept in their practice of cultivating the *Dào,* many *zhìrén* become teachers themselves. Earnest seekers search for such adepts in order to "get personal instruction" in the correct techniques required for their own spiritual development:

> Although the science of life *(mìng)* can be transmitted *(shòu),*
> the science of essence *(xìng)* cannot be handed on *(chuán).*
> The ignorant *(yú)* who practise blindly are truly pitiful.
> If you don't get personal *(qīnkǒu)* instruction from an adept *(zhìrén),*
> all your psychological manipulations will instead bring on error.
>
> *Wáng Wéiyī, Míngdào piān, VES p.178*

Qīnkǒu means 'from his own mouth' – without the direct and personal guidance of a *zhìrén,* a seeker is left to rely upon his own thoughts and understanding, which can easily lead him astray.

In a question-and-answer *(wèndá)* exchange, thirteenth-century Daoist master Lǐ Dàochún tells his disciple Zhào Dàokě (*aka.* Dìng'ān) that only a person who has attained spiritual perfection is qualified to teach the correct methods. Finding a *zhìrén* might be difficult; however, according to Lǐ Dàochún, if a seeker is fortunate enough to find such a master, and he diligently follows the methods taught to him, he is sure to reach his goal:

> The essentials of arriving *(zhì)* at Reality *(Zhēn)* are utterly simple, utterly easy; difficult to find, but easy to accomplish. None would fail to achieve it if they were guided by perfected people *(zhìrén).*
>
> *Lǐ Dàochún, Zhōnghé jí, BBH p.47*

A similar view is held by the unknown author of the *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn* (*c.*1200):

> Lead and mercury will not grow if you have not received the teachings *(lùn)* from enlightened teachers *(zhìrén).* They also will not grow if you practise the methods incorrectly.
>
> *Tàixuán bǎodiǎn 1:1.7, NEL p.79*

Lead and mercury are alchemical symbols for *yīn* and *yáng*. Only genuine enlightened teachers have the proper skills and experience to teach students how to create harmony between these opposing forces – a vital aspect of Daoist practice.

The term *zhìrén* is used several times in the *Wénzǐ* (*c.*200 BCE) in reference to the *shèngwáng* (sage-ruler). The *shèngwáng* is a 'complete' person; he is selfless in the government of his people. As in many discussions concerning governance by spiritually enlightened rulers, especially in early Daoist writings such as the *Dàodé jīng,* the *Zhuāngzǐ* and the *Wénzǐ,* there is an understanding that similar benefits may be derived by the individual through governance of the self, and his relationships with and attitudes towards other people and the world at large:

> The government of accomplished people *(zhìrén)* discards public cleverness and eradicates showy refinement. According with the *Dào,* it abandons knowledge; in concert with the people, it administers fairly. It minimizes what it keeps and restricts what it asks for. It brushes aside enticements and yearnings, gets rid of desire for valuables, and forsakes deliberation.
>
> *Wénzǐ 1, DZ746*

> Therefore, the government of complete people *(zhìrén)* is imbued with virtue *(dé)* and embraces the Way *(Dào),* promoting truthfulness and happily disbursing inexhaustible knowledge.
>
> *Wénzǐ 2, TCC1 p.177*

> The more knowledge and ability are there, the more virtue *(dé)* declines; so perfect people *(zhìrén)* are pure and simple, without useless complexity.
>
> The government of perfect people *(zhìrén)* is unassertive and unobtrusive, not displaying anything to want. Mind *(xīn)* and spirit *(shén)* are at rest, the physical body and the essential nature are in tune. In repose, they embody virtue *(dé);* in action, they succeed by reason. Following the Way *(Dào)* of naturalness *(zìrán),* they focus on the inevitable. They are serene and uncontrived *(wúwéi),* and the land is at peace; they are aloof and desireless, and the people are naturally simple *(pǔ).* They do not contend in anger, and material goods are sufficient.
>
> (In a country ruled in this way), those who give do not consider that benevolence; and those who receive do not decline. Blessings come back to them, but no one considers it a favour.
>
> *Wénzǐ 7, WTUM pp.135–36*

See also: **shèngwáng**, **xiān**, **zhēnrén**, **zhīrén**.

1. Lín Xīgōng, *Zhuāngzǐ yīn,* on *Zhuāngzǐ* 26, in *TT2* p.295.
2. Liú Yīmíng, *Wùdào lù, TCC3* p.530.

zhīrén (C) *Lit.* an aware *(zhī)* person *(rén),* a person *(rén)* who knows *(zhī);* in Daoism, a realized person who always acts in the spirit of *wúwéi* (noncontrivance, noncontention); regarded in Daoism as superior to the *zhēnrén* (true person); translated variously as accomplished person, ultimate person, utmost person, highest person, arrived person, even superman. The term is also frequently used to portray the original perfect state of human beings before being subjected to worldly conditioning.

In the *Zhuāngzǐ* (C4th BCE), the *zhīrén* is characterized as a Daoist practitioner who, as he perfects himself spiritually, also aligns his *dé* (nature, characteristics, virtue) to that of the *Dào,* in order to become a good human being. Some writings say there is an obligation for the *zhīrén* to pay attention to social affairs as well – that he should play a positive role in society, living a normal human life. Since he successfully governs himself, having attained the highest human characteristics *(dé),* he is ideally qualified to directly or indirectly govern others:

> He who knows *(zhī)* the part that the heavenly plays in him, and also knows that which the human in him *ought* to play, has reached the perfection *(zhì)* of knowledge. He who knows *(zhī)* the part that the heavenly plays knows that it is naturally born with him; he who knows *(zhīrén)* the part that the human *ought* to play proceeds, with the knowledge that he possesses, to nourish it in the direction of what he does not yet know *(bùzhī):* to complete one's natural term of years and not come to an untimely end in the middle of his course is the fullness of knowledge *(zhī).*
>
> *Zhuāngzǐ 6; cf. TT1 p.236*

A *zhīrén* is internally calm, always acting in the spirit of natural spontaneity *(zìrán)* and noncontrivance *(wúwéi).* He has no desires, because he is no longer concerned with the physical senses. He develops and maintains his inner spiritual being through meditation, and his outer body with physical and breathing exercises – all of which contribute to a healthy body, healthy mind, and healthy spirit.

The *zhīrén* is the highest of human beings, transcending the limits of normal humanity, while remaining in the world. Unaffected by changing conditions of want and wealth, neither the positive nor the negative changes his behaviour. He does not strive to accomplish any particular thing, yet he is never complacent. Contented, he accepts his fate and fulfils his worldly duties.

See also: **zhēnrén**, **zhìrén**.

zhìzhě (C) *Lit.* a sage, a wise man; a clever and knowledgable person.

In a dialogue with Daoist immortal Chìsōngzǐ (*fl.c.*3000 BCE), Huángdì (the Yellow Emperor) asks the master to explain to him the different types and ranks of *zhìzhě.* Chìsōngzǐ answers:

> They come in three kinds, all full of benevolence and good will *(rénài).* Those *zhìzhě* of high wisdom understand the patterns of heaven and have insight into the principles of the earth. Without studying, they

> know; without being taught, they understand. Silently, they recognize all. They examine the tones and pitches, and inspect wisdom and stupidity, their minds are full of empathy and compassion, and they do not despise others. They recognize success and defeat (in good time), understand when to advance and withdraw, and clearly distinguish life and death. People like these, although they may be poor, will in the end be rich; although they may be humble for a time, they will be lofty in the end. Such are the people of high wisdom.
>
> Those *zhìzhě* of medium wisdom deeply penetrate the scriptures and writings, are always conscious of ritual propriety and proper respect. They look up to the wise and think of order, support those in danger, and rescue the weak. Gracious and generous, they have no regrets; loyal and filial, they suffer no failure. In their speech, they do not harm other beings, in their behaviour they are always humble and withdrawing, warm and modest. People like these may not study, yet they find awakening in the end; they may not stand out yet, but they will find full attainment. Such are the people of medium wisdom.
>
> Those *zhìzhě* of lesser wisdom practise good deeds. They amend their past (habits), cultivate the future, pursue good actions, and think much of learning. Devoutly believing in the patterns of good and evil, they do not encroach upon the possessions of others but protect their own life and take good care of their body. Matching the principles of the *Dào* and recognizing the universal law, they spontaneously love the weak while inherently fearing disasters and decline. Like this, making continuous efforts, they never undergo loss or failure, and never meet with obstructions or misfortune. Such are the people of lesser wisdom.
>
> *Chìsōngzǐ zhōngjiè jīng 11a–b, CCED p.167*

On hearing this, Huángdì says:

> Excellent! Most excellent, indeed! These words are too precious to be measured in terms even of merit *(gōng)* and virtue *(dé)*. I will diligently follow what you have explained, and show its record to the multitude of people, thus creating a great passage (to transcendence) for all living beings. Humbly I knock my head to you and withdraw to practise in accordance with the teachings *(jiào)*.
>
> *Chìsōngzǐ zhōngjiè jīng 11b, CCED p.167*

See also: **shèng**.

zhùchí (C) *Lit.* an abbot, a head monk in a Daoist monastery. See **chūjiārén**.

ẓill (A) *Lit.* shadow. See **sāyah**.

ẓofeh (He) *Lit.* seer, visionary, watchman.

zǔ, **zǔshī**, **fózǔ** (C), **senzo**, **so**, **oya**, **biso** (J), **yab mes** (T) *Lit.* ancestor, patriarch, forefather, progenitor *(zǔ);* originator, founder of a craft, religious sect, *etc. (zǔ); zǔ* is sometimes aggregated with another character to create an honorific, such as *zǔshī,* which may be translated as 'patriarch-master' or 'founding teacher'; likewise, *fózǔ,* the founder of a Buddhist school, a Buddhist patriarch; also, ancestor *(senzo);* ancestor, forefather, progenitor *(so);* parent, founder *(oya);* a patriarch who founds a sect or school *(biso);* forefather, ancestor, patriarch *(yab mes);* terms used for the patriarch or head of one of the East Asian schools of Buddhism, also known as the ancestor or founder.

In Daoism, *zǔ* is sometimes used as an honorific suffix, notably with legendary immortal *(xiān)* and Daoist master Lǚ Dòngbīn (*b.c.*796), also known as Lǚzǔ (Ancestor Lǚ). Others addressed by this honorific include Lǎozǐ, who is occasionally referred to in Daoist writings as Lǎozǔ.

In Buddhism, the various terms indicate a lineage from the Buddha to the patriarch, sometimes represented as an uninterrupted transmission of the *Dharma* from master to disciple. A number of Buddhist schools keep a historical record of their principal *Dharma* teachers, as authentication of their lineage and validation of the living patriarch. Such schools include the main *Zen* Buddhist schools of Japan, the esoteric Buddhism of Tibet, and Chinese *Chán* Buddhism. The means of transmission can be oral, in a verse, through signs, or directly from the mind of one patriarch to the next. Traditionally, the formal passing of a master or a patriarch's office to a successor is marked by the handing over of his robes.

It depends upon the individual school as to whether the lineage of patriarchs or ancestors is continuous, and whether or not it can be dated back to the historical Buddha himself. In esoteric and *Chán* Buddhist schools, where the relationship of master to disciple is of great importance, the direct appointment of the successor by the predecessor is of correspondingly greater significance.

In other schools, such as Pure Land Buddhism, where direct contact between the patriarch and the individual is not regarded as essential to the transmission of the *Dharma,* the patriarchs may not follow in an unbroken lineage. Instead, they represent the major influences in the historical development of the lineage. The Japanese *Jōdo Shinsū* ('True Pure Land School') branch of Pure Land Buddhism – of which about twenty percent of the Japanese population regard themselves as followers, and which is founded upon the teachings of two ex-*Tendai* monks, Hōnen (1133–1212)

and his disciple Shinran (1173–1263) – lists seven prior Indian, Chinese, and Japanese patriarchs.

In the *Chán* and *Zen* traditions, the first patriarch after the Buddha was Mahākāshyapa (C. Móhējiāyè, J. Makakashō), following whom there were a further twenty-six Indian teachers before Bodhidharma (*c.*470–543) travelled to China, becoming the first *Chán* patriarch. The Chinese tradition preserves a list of the first six *Chán* patriarchs, following whom there was a profusion of *Chán* masters, with no commonly accepted seventh patriarch. With the passage of time, several lineages developed within the *Chán* tradition, some of which were transmitted to Japan.

Twenty-four separate lineages once existed in Japanese *Zen* Buddhism, of which only three have survived to the present day in the *Sōtō, Rinzai,* and the later *Ōbaku* (established 1661) schools. The first *Zen* patriarch was Eihei Dōgen Zenji (1200–1253), who crossed the treacherous East China Sea in 1223 for training in *Chán* Buddhism. After a considerable search in both Japan and China, even refusing *dharma* transmission from one master, he found what he was seeking with the master Rújìng, the thirteenth patriarch of the *Cáodòng* (J. *Sōtō*) lineage. Receiving *dharma* transmission from Rújìng in 1227, he returned to Japan soon after, where he established the *Sōtō Zen* school and lineage.

Likewise, the monk Myōan Eisai (1141–1215), feeling the need for the reform of Japanese Buddhism, made a pilgrimage to China in 1168, in the company of a *Shingon* monk by the name of Chōgen (1121–1200). Visiting Mount Tiāntái, the centre and source of the Japanese *Tendai* tradition, they came to understand the extent to which *Tendai* meditation practices were derived from the Chinese. His first journey lasted only six months but, in 1187, Myōan Eisai returned to China with the intention of tracing Buddhist roots back to India. Refused entry into India, he studied in the Chinese *Línjì* (J. *Rinzai*) school. After authentication as a qualified teacher of meditation, he returned to Japan in 1191, where he founded the *Rinzai Zen* lineage.

Some while later, in 1265, the monk Nanpo Shōmyō also travelled to China to study in the Línjì school before returning to Japan in 1267, where he founded the *Ōtōkan Rinzai Zen* lineage, which remains the sole surviving branch of the *Rinzai* tradition. The *Ōtōkan* lineage has its main centres in the Kyoto temple complexes of Daitokuji (founded around 1315 by its second patriarch Daitō Kokushi) and the far larger Myōshinji (founded in 1342 by its third patriarch Kanzan Egen). The grounds of the Myōshinji complex were previously the palace of the Emperor Hanazono, who abdicated in 1318, became ordained as a Buddhist monk in 1335, and in 1342 donated the palace to found the temple. As a result, the *Ōtōkan* lineage is sometimes called the *Myōshinji* lineage.

Lineages and *dharma* transmission are not always simple and linear, and there are numerous crossovers and complexities among the various lineages

claimed by the different Buddhist schools. Dōgen, for example, appears in the *Rinzai* lineage as a *dharma* heir of the *Zen* master Myōzen, with whom he had studied for eight years, travelling with him to China, and whom Dōgen acknowledged as one of his teachers.[1]

Eihei Dōgen Zenji speaks of the significance of direct transmission of the *Dharma* from patriarch to patriarch. By this means, he maintains, the teachings of the Buddha have been transmitted in all purity. In what is a common expression in Japanese Buddhism, he speaks of "patriarchs and *buddhas*", clearly identifying the one with the other:

> As my master put it, the honoured great master Shākyamuni (the Buddha), whilst with his assembly on India's divine Vulture Peak, imparted to Makakashō this *Dharma,* which patriarch after patriarch then correctly transmitted down to the Venerable Bodhidharma. This Venerable One proceeded on his own to China, where he imparted the *Dharma* to great master Eka. This was the first time that the transmission of the *buddhadharma* had come to the Eastern lands. It ultimately reached the sixth Chinese patriarch, meditation master Daikan Enō, by being directly transmitted in this manner.
>
> *Eihei Dōgen, Shōbōgenzō, Bendowā, T2582 82:15b29–c6;*
> *cf. STHT (1) p.3*

> In this way, ancestral masters, as successive heirs for generation after generation, have passed on the face-to-face transmission (J. *menju,* C. *miànshòu*). This was done in accord with a disciple being 'seen' by a master and the master 'recognizing' the disciple. If even one patriarch, or one master, or one disciple had failed to confer the face-to-face transmission *(menju),* there would not be *buddha* after *buddha* or patriarch after patriarch. For instance, by letting the waters of many rivers gather and irrigate the roots, they have caused the branches of our tradition to grow long. And by their keeping the light going, its brightness has been made constant. And by their having done so in millions of billions of ways, the trunk and its branches are one and the same.… As a consequence, they have amassed an age of days and nights of keeping true to Shākyamuni Buddha as though he were right before them, and have amassed a generation of days and nights of being illuminated by the presence of the Buddha's face. We do not know for how many aeons beyond measure this has gone on. Just quietly thinking about this should fill us with heartfelt gratitude.
>
> *Eihei Dōgen, Shōbōgenzō, Menju, T2582 82:214b18–c1;*
> *cf. SDT3 (57) p.211, STHT (74) p.836*

In short:

> The *buddhas* and the patriarchs are the expression of the Truth. Therefore, when Buddhist patriarchs are deciding who is a Buddhist patriarch, they always ask, "Does he express the Truth or not?"
>
> *Eihei Dōgen, Shōbōgenzō, Dōtoku, T2582 82:163a21–23; cf. SDT2 (39) p.333*

They have all taught that the key to enlightenment is meditation. No other practice or ritual is required:

> It is said that all the patriarchs and *buddhas* who have maintained the *buddhadharma* have without question considered practice based upon proper sitting in *jijuyū samādhi* (self-fulfilling meditation) as the right path that led to their enlightenment. All those who have gained enlightenment in India and China have followed in this way of practice as well. It is a matter of rightly transmitting the wonderful means in personal encounter from master to disciple, and on the disciple's sustaining the true essence thus received.
>
> According to the authentic tradition of Buddhism, this personally and directly transmitted *buddhadharma* is the supreme of the supreme. From the first time you go before your master and receive his teaching, you no longer have need for incense offerings, homage paying, *nembutsu* (repetition of a *mantra*), penance disciplines, or *sūtra*-recitation. Just cast off your body and mind in the practice of *zazen.*
>
> *Eihei Dōgen, Shōbōgenzō, Bendowā, T2582 82:15c21–16a1; cf. HDSW (2) p.11*

See also: **menju shihō** (7.5), **shī**, **zōngzǔ** (▸1).

1. See "Dōgen," "Zen lineage charts," *Wikipedia,* ret. June 2013.

7.2 The Inner Guide, the Inner Beloved

Spirituality is inner and the greatest spiritual guidance also comes from within. While the outer framework of spiritual teaching and practice consists of good counsel on how to live as a human being and what methods to adopt in order to increase spiritual awareness, the most sublime teaching and guidance is always inner and transcendent, beyond words and all normal human forms of communication.

Perceived through the translucent screen of an individual's belief system and culture, a 'stepped-down' aspect of the Divine may be experienced in a variety of ways. The Divine is one Reality, nameless and formless; but this Reality can be given form when experienced through the filter of an individual's mind. Generically, such inner experience has sometimes been described as meeting with the inner beloved – a beloved who has been portrayed in many ways.

Experiences such as these are inner, and require some degree of withdrawal of the attention from the outer world and from the body. They may come as a result of long periods spent in concentrated meditation and inner spiritual practice; but they can also arise spontaneously for a variety of reasons. In fact, even in meditation, a practitioner is generally unable to control the 'appearance' of the beloved. Understandably, it is difficult for others to appreciate the nature of such experiences, and descriptions of them are readily misconstrued.

The inner guide has been experienced and described in many ways. Many such descriptions rely heavily on cultural metaphors, often borrowed from the language of human love. Terms and metaphors associated with this area of mystical experience form the basis of the entries contained in this section.

abrū (P) (pl. *abrūvān*) *Lit.* eyebrow; in Sufi poetic imagery, a brief and alluring glimpse of the divine beloved within; an image partly derived from the Muslim practice of the veil.

A beautiful, but veiled, woman reveals only an eyebrow, promising much more that is hidden. Just so, the divine beloved may reveal only a glimpse of himself within, to magnify the lover's yearning for more. In this context, Sufis characteristically make little or no distinction between God and the inner spiritual manifestation of the master – the *shaykh,* the *pīr,* or the *murshid:*

> Love-crazed I became when my beloved,
> like the new moon, revealed an eyebrow *(abrū),*
> moved gracefully, then hid his face.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.34, DIH p.81; cf. DHWC (45:3) p.112*

Both lover and beloved, says Ḥāfiẓ, preceded the existence of the creation:

> Before this azure arching vault was raised on high,
> the true beloved's eyebrow *(abrū-yi jānān)*
> was the arch that met my eye.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.59, DIH p.132; cf. DHWC (178:5) p.343; cf. in SSE1 p.5*

The eyebrow itself is commonly linked with other metaphors. Thus, the curved eyebrow was conceived as a bow (*kamān-i abrū,* the bow of the eyebrow), shooting the arrows of love's yearning into the heart of the lover, eliminating or killing his ego:

> Let arrows fly from your eyebrow's bow *(kamān-i abrū),*
> that I may die by your hand and arm.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.166, DIH p.292; cf. DHWC (377:2) p.650*

The yearning that eliminates the lover's ego or individual self is symbolized by ʿAṭṭār as the loss of his head:

> From the bow of his eyebrow *(kamān-i abrū),*
> his glance, like an arrow, topples my head every hour.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 321:5227, DASN p.281*

Nothing touches the inner being so powerfully as the beloved's "glance":

> No foe could ever strike the life of Ḥāfiẓ
> like the arrow of the glance
> from his eyebrow's bow *(kamān).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.73, DIH p.145; cf. DHWC (128:8) p.267*

ʿAṭṭār is explicit:

> How unashamedly your eyebrow *(abrū),*
> abruptly and brazenly,
> broke down your lovers' selfishness,
> destroying all their egotism.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 647:8878, DASN p.465; cf. in SSE1 p.6*

Saʿdī says that the pleasure of being shot by one of his divine arrows is sufficient to make the prey return for more:

> Who has given such skill in archery
> to that delicate-armed beloved
> that an arrow of his loving glances
> is enough to kill a deer as prey?
> The prey of a thousand hearts
> will return to face your arrow,
> if shot from the kind of eyebrow-bow *(kamān-i abrū)*
> that you possess.
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 6:1–2, KSSS p.346; cf. BOS p.7*

In a variant of the metaphor, he also writes that the soul of the mystic is slain by a missile from the "catapult" of the beloved's "eyebrows":

> You have not made a prey of the bird of the mystic's heart
> save with the catapult *(kamān muhrah)*
> of your arched eyebrows *(abrū-yi khamīdah).*
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 329:6, KSSS p.320; cf. TOS p.442*

The prayer niche *(miḥrāb)* in a mosque directs the attention of the worshipper towards Mecca. Symbolically, the *miḥrāb* is understood either as the inner place where the devotee faces the direction of the divine beloved, or as the spiritual goal itself. The prayer niche of the eyebrow *(miḥrāb-i abrū)* thus refers to the manifestations or glimpses of the divine beloved, which focus the lover's attention upon Him. The arched prayer niche was also likened to the arched eyebrow of the beloved. Saʿdī says that his poetry is so well loved only because he worships at the prayer niche of the beloved's eyebrows:

> All humanity are admirers of my poetry
> only because I am a devout worshipper
> at the prayer niche of your two eyebrows *(miḥrāb-i dū abrū-yi tū).*
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 116:6, KSSS p.373; cf. BOS p.128*

Just as the arching (*ṭāq-i abrū,* the arch of the eyebrows) and other expressions of the eyebrow convey various unspoken communications, so it is said that symbolically the beloved's eyebrows convey divine messages and intimations, drawing the lover's attention towards himself:

> The bystanders may be unaware,
> yet every moment from his eye and forehead
> come a myriad messages, issuing from that eyebrow *(abrū).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.224, DIH p.359; cf. DHWC (475:7) p.786*

Similarly, since human eyebrows reflect character, expressing the attributes of the individual, the divine Attributes, which express the nature of the Essence, are also symbolized by the eyebrows.[1]

Sometimes, the Sufi poets speak of the curve or arch of the eyebrow *(kham-i abrū)* or the corner of the eyebrow *(gūshah-'i abrū).* For Ḥāfiẓ, a vision of the arch of the eyebrow – just a glimpse of the inner beloved – sends him into rapture:

> While praying,
> I recalled the arch of your eyebrow *(abrū):*
> Such a state then overcame me
> that the prayer niche itself cried out.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.71, DIH p.159; cf. DHWC (230:1) p.419*

In fact, for the lover, he writes that the only "prayer niche", the only place of refuge is the "corner" of the beloved's eyebrow:

> In the ascetic's retreat and the *ṣūfī*'s solitude,
> there is no other prayer arch
> but the corner of your eyebrow *(gūshah-'i abrū).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.39, DIH p.95; cf. DHWC (102:15) p.218*

> In the corner of your eyebrow *(gūshah-'i abrū),* my soul dwells:
> no king could know greater happiness
> than dwelling in this corner *(gūshah).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.84, DIH p.167; cf. DHWC (171:2) p.328*

To ʿAṭṭār, the arch of the beloved's eyebrow forms and sustains creation:

> The wheel of heaven is turned
> by your eyebrow's arch *(kham-i abrū):*
> The sun and moon are but images of your face.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 648:8883, DASN p.465; cf. in SSE1 p.9*

Extending the metaphor, Ḥāfiẓ likens the curve of the eyebrow to the curve in a polo stick that has thrown him into a state of ecstasy:

> The eyebrow *(abrū)* of the friend
> caught me in the curve of his polo stick,
> casting me into such ecstasy
> that I became a legend in my own time.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.186, DIH p.313; cf. DHWC (408:8) p.693*

All these allusions to the beloved's eyebrow signify the deep love of these Sufi writers for their spiritual master. Just a glimpse of his inner form is a glimpse of the Divine, which consumes their inner being with love and bliss.

Contrary to the other symbolic meanings, the eyebrow is also said to symbolize the fall of a seeker from his particular stage on the path, due to negligence and various imperfections that arise within him.[2]

See also: **chashm**, **miḥrāb** (▸3).

1. Lāhījī, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR* p.552.
2. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.79; *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.166; Tabrīzī, *Rashf al-Alḥāẓ, RKA* p.56.

angelic form of Christ The spiritual form of Jesus; one of a number of expressions encountered in the Manichaean psalms:

> I thirst for Life:
> Be not long in opening to me,
> for my heart has thirsted. . . .
> O angelic form of Christ,
> open to me, crown me.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB pp.154–55*

See also: **astral form**, **divine form**.

angelic visions (in Judaism) Waking or dream visions of angels, which might sometimes appear to be of God Himself or of some inner power; includes *giluy Elijah* (revelation of Elijah) and visions of a *maggid* (angel).

A well-known story is related in the *Talmud* in which four of the early rabbis ascend to heaven *(pardes):*[1]

> Four men entered the garden *(pardes):* Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Aḥer (Abuyah), and Rabbi Akiva. . . . Ben Azzai glimpsed and died. . . . Ben

> Zoma looked and became demented. . . . Aḥer cut the shoots. . . . Rabbi Akiva merged in peace.
>
> *Babylonian Talmud, Mishnah Ḥagigah 14b*

Rabbi Akiva is portrayed in the story as having entered in peace and returned in peace. A verse from *Song of Songs* is quoted in relationship to him: "The King has brought me into his chambers,"[2] where the "chambers" are interpreted as the inner realms.

Ben Azzai, it is said, "glimpsed and died", illustrating a line from the *Psalms:* "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."[3] Although it is commonly interpreted to mean that Ben Azzai died a physical death as a result of the intensity of his spiritual experience, it may actually mean that he attained union with God. As many mystics have said, for the soul to attain union with the Divine, it is necessary to 'die while living' – to pass through the experience of death while still living in the body.

The third sage, Ben Zoma, went insane, since he could not integrate the spiritual life with the material.

The fourth, Elisha ben Abuyah, had a vision of the angel *Metatron.* His experience is described in the *Sefer Hekhalot* ('Book of the Chambers'), where it is said that he saw *Metatron* sitting on the throne of glory, surrounded by the divine powers of all nations. Thinking mistakenly that *Metatron* was a power equal to God himself, he declared, "There are two powers in heaven." Looking at the celestial realms from the human level, Elisha made the error of assuming that the power whom he had first encountered in his inner ascent was the Lord of the entire creation. In fact, the power he saw was only an intermediate lord or ruler. Elisha did not understand that his experience did not contradict his understanding of one God. He therefore suffered from doubt and confusion, perceiving an essential duality in creation where there was none, and subsequently lost his faith in God. To "cut the shoots" is an obscure expression, variously interpreted. Some say it means that he cut himself off from the one God of his tradition, and thus withered spiritually, like the cut shoots of a plant.

The vision of an angelic being may sometimes be a projection of the devotee's own mind, rather than a vision of a genuine higher being. The mind is a powerful entity and can project itself in many ways, even as an angel. Such visions could be brought about through intense meditation on the various names of God or angels, or on special combinations of letters and words. Rabbi Yehudah ben Nissim ibn Malka, a thirteenth-century Moroccan Jewish mystic who was influenced by medieval philosophy, Arabic astrology and the Kabbalah, is clear on the subject. In his *Commentary to Sefer Yeẓirah,* he writes that the person is only seeing a reflection of his own self, as one sees oneself in a mirror:

> I have seen with my own eyes a man who saw a power in the form of an angel while he was awake, and he spoke with him and told him

> future things. The sage said: "Know that he sees nothing other than himself; for he sees himself front and back, as one who sees himself in a mirror, who sees nothing other than himself, and it appears as if it were something separate from your body, like you. In the same manner, he sees that power which guards his body and guides his soul, and then his soul sings and rejoices, distinguishes and sees."
>
> *Ibn Malka, Kitāb Uns we-Tafsīr, in JMAL p.18*

Ibn Malka also suggests a psycho-spiritual explanation of such revelations. They can arise, he says, either as a result of interaction between mind and spirit, or between memory and imagination, or entirely as a result of imagination. An influx of spiritual energy can thus appear, for example, as an angel who predicts the future. He also describes divine revelation that seems to come from angels as actually coming from within oneself. He maintains that the speech heard by the prophet Moses from "the burning bush"[4] actually originated from within Moses himself. He further interprets a verse from the prophet Zechariah, in which the prophet says that the angel spoke to him, to mean that the angel spoke from within him.[5]

The original Arabic phrase describing the transmission of information from the angel to Moses and Zechariah is translated into Hebrew, in one instance as *heggid lo ʿatidot* (told him the future) and then several times as *maggid ʿatidot* (tells the future). In ibn Malka's writings there is an anticipation of the way in which later Jewish mystics described the source of their inner revelation as originating from a *maggid* who is a "personal guide or celestial angelic mentor".[6]

The fifteenth-century Rabbi Ephraim ben Israel al-Naqawah used astrological concepts to explain the revelations and visions experienced within; he also interpreted the visions as an ability to see oneself in a pure state:

> In the books of the sages of the zodiac signs (*i.e.* astrologers), it is written that there are people who may see powers while awake, and that it will seem to them that they are bodies, and they will speak with them and tell them future things. And they (the astrologers) said that the reason for this is the reception of (spiritual) influx that a man receives from the supernal entities. And this experience will be strengthened in accordance with the configuration of the constellation at the hour of their birth. And they further explained that the seer of those powers that appear in the likeness of bodies does not see them outside himself, but all that they see is within themselves – just as he might see his form in a mirror or in something pure and transparent, where he sees his own form with his own (physical) eyes.
>
> *Ephraim ben Israel al-Naqawah, Shaʿar Kevod ha-Shem, SKSN fol.94ab; cf. in JMAL p.20*

See also: **giluy Eliyahu**, **maggid**, **pardes**.

1. *Babylonian Talmud, Mishnah Ḥagigah,* in *SBJT* pp.30–31.
2. *Song of Songs* 1:4, *JCL.*
3. *Psalms* 116:15, *KJV.*
4. *Exodus* 3:2–6.
5. *Zechariah* 4:1; see Moshe Idel, "Jewish Mysticism Among the Jews of Arab/Moslem Lands," in *JSSM* p.19.
6. Moshe Idel, "Jewish Mysticism Among the Jews of Arab/Moslem Lands" in *JSSM* p.19.

ʿāriḍ (A), **ʿāriż** (P) *Lit.* cheek, face; in Sufi symbolism, the inner manifestation of the divine Beauty; the inner spiritual beloved; the spiritual being of the master – the *murshid, pīr,* or *shaykh;* part of a family of metaphors in which the beloved is depicted as a beautiful woman. Sanā'ī says that this form guides the "night traveller", the lover who practises meditation at night. "Your lovely stature" is a metaphor with a similar meaning:

> Your winsome cheek *(ʿāriż),* like the moonlight,
> guides the night traveller.
> Your lovely stature, like a comely cypress,
> strolls through lovers' hearts.
> *Sanā'ī, Dīvān 34, AMM p.810; cf. in SSE1 pp.103–4*

In the lyrics of Ḥāfiẓ, the "Water of that cheek" is probably an allusion to the divine Water of Life, the creative power, that inexorably draws the soul in all-conquering, all-consuming love and longing:

> Beware the Water of that cheek *(Āb-i ān ʿāriż),*
> for it has made the lips of lions parched and dry, . . .
> and cast down heroes into water.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.239; cf. DHWC (505:2, 14) pp.829–30, in SSE1 p.104*

He says that he has sought refuge with the beloved within:

> I have taken shelter in the beauty of your cheek *(ʿāriż)* and stature.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.304, DIH p.43; cf. DHWC (19:2) p.69*

And he observes that the beloved cannot really be compared with the natural beauties of this world:

> His cheek *(ʿāriż)* cannot be compared
> to things like the moon in the sky:
> The beloved cannot be likened
> to every footless and headless one.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.72, DIH p.147; cf. DHWC (127:4) p.265*

Saʿdī says that compared to the radiant beloved, the beauty of material phenomena is a faint reflection:

> Beside that auspicious face *(ʿāriż),*
> the rose no longer possesses either scent or colour.
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 70:5, KSSS p.363; cf. BOS p.79*

See also: **khadd**, **khaṭṭ**, **rukh**, **rukhsār**.

ashṭ-dal kamal (H) *Lit.* eight *(ashṭ)*-petalled *(dal)* lotus *(kamal);* a centre in the lower astral realms, situated below *sahasra-dal kamal* (thousand-petalled lotus), where a disciple first consciously meets the astral or radiant form of his master. It is on the threshold of the astral realms. The eight-petalled lotus or centre in *aṇḍa* is reflected in the eight-petalled lotus in *piṇḍa,* the navel or *nābhi* chakra of the physical body. Likewise, the eight-petalled lotus in *aṇḍa* is a reflection of an eight-petalled lotus in *brahmaṇḍa,* a region known to Indian saints as *pārbrahm* (beyond *Brahm*) or *sunn* (void). The 'lotus' represents an energy centre or crossroads, and its petals are aspects of that energy centre.

An eight-petalled lotus is also a central motif in the Japanese Buddhist *taizō* (womb-repository) *maṇḍala,* where it symbolizes the essence of compassion. It also represents the subtle eight-petalled lotus in the physical heart, where dwells, it is said, the 'spiritual mind'.[1] According to Tibetan Buddhism, this centre is variously described as blue, red, or white in colour.[2]

For the vast majority of initiates on the path of the Word (the divine creative power), the eight-petalled lotus is of the most overriding significance. At initiation, a master of the Word takes his place at this centre, within each disciple. Reaching this centre is the first major staging post on the inner journey because, after this point, a disciple is fully conscious that he is never alone; that his master is always with him.[3]

It may be difficult for a human mind to comprehend how a master can be within every disciple simultaneously. The real form of such a master, however, is the Word, also known as the Sound or Sound Current because it is inwardly experienced as both sound and light. The physical form, the astral form and any higher forms that are assumed by a master are all projections of this one, all-pervading power. A master is a projection of this power, and at whatever level a disciple has reached, the master assumes a form, according to the natural laws prevailing at that level of creation.

No meeting is more longed for and none so beautiful and full of love as this meeting with the radiant or astral form of the master. Nothing is so sweet as that which has been fought for with such dedication and effort, though the disciple realizes that this effort is only his response to the inner pull of the inner master.

Usually, the initiate will have been aware for some time that the master is within him, watching, guiding, and caring for every aspect of his life. On many occasions, he will have felt the master's presence. So to meet the beloved within after so much labour, is indeed a sweet fulfilment of a long struggle.

The headquarters of the mind and soul in the physical body is the *do-dal kamal* (two-petalled lotus), the centre or *chakra* behind the eyes. The attention, however, is spread, not only throughout the body, but also into the entire world of the physical senses. The *do-dal kamal* is therefore the point at which concentration is initially focused, by means of repetition, in order to bring this scattered attention back to its natural centre. This concentration begins in the darkness inside the forehead, deepens as it passes through the locality of the human mind – the *chidākāsha* (sky of mind), which includes the *antaḥkaraṇa* (inner instrument, the human mind) – where it witnesses lights like those of the stars, the sun and the moon, and culminates when it reaches the *ashṭ-dal kamal,* where the spiritual form of the master is waiting to receive it. Up to this point, faith can waver, because it is not based on experience. But, here, personal experience of who and what the master really is turns faith into certainty.

It is also from this point that contact is made with the real Sound, and it is from here that the soul really begins the mystic journey back to God. In fact, where once the initiate struggled to collect his attention from the world and to go within, the Sound now exerts such a magnetic power of attraction in an inward direction, that he is now reluctant to come out. Up to this point the master has been pushing from behind (so to speak), but from the *ashṭ-dal kamal,* he pulls from in front. It is also at this point that a soul really begins to understand the workings of fate or *prārabdha karma,* and to be content with the manner of its repayment.

The soul then continues onward in the company of the radiant master until all stages of the inner journey have been crossed, and the soul has returned to God. Though each of these stages or centres is crossed in turn on the inward ascent, the habit of the mind is such that it distracts and confuses the soul by splitting the inner experience into different puzzling stages and different experiences. A disciple, however, needs to remain quiescent, allowing all stages to slip past while keeping the attention fixed upon his beautiful companion, the radiant form of the master, who manifests from the divine Word, and into which the disciple gradually merges, forgetting all else. Even so, the soul actually goes nowhere. Eternity is present, here and now, with and within every soul. The journey is travelled, not in space and time, but in consciousness.

There is sometimes confusion between the *do-dal kamal* (also known as the *āgyā chakra*) and the *ashṭ-dal kamal.* When a disciple begins to meditate, he moves progressively deeper from the *do-dal kamal* towards the *ashṭ-dal kamal.* Keeping his attention focused, his increasing concentration takes

him steadily inwards. This 'area' situated in the forehead is also called the *tīsrā til* (third eye).

See also: **aṇḍa** (4.1), **ashṭ-dal kamal** (4.1), **astral form**.

1. Taikō Yamasaki, *Shingon, SJEB* pp.129, 161–62, 201.
2. Dzong-ka-ba, *Yoga Tantra, YTPM* pp.136, 146; K. Dowman, *Sky Dancer, SDSL* pp.11, 178, 213 (n.36); *Dalai Lamas on Tantra, DLTM* p.167.
3. See Maharaj Sawan Singh, *Spiritual Gems* 9, *SG* p.16; Julian Johnson, *Path of the Masters, POM* p.174; Flora Wood, *In Search of the Way, ISWW* p.21.

astral double An uncommon term for the spiritual form of the master. See **astral form**.

astral form, **radiant form**, **spiritual form** The inner or spiritual form of the master encountered on the threshold of the astral realm, which then accompanies the soul on the ascent to God. Mystics of the divine Word have taught that the real master *is* the Word, and that, at whatever level a soul reaches, the Word assumes a form that is recognized by the soul as the master. In reality there is only one spiritual form, that of the Word or *Shabd.* When a disciple reaches the astral realm, the master appears in an astral form; likewise, in the causal realm, he appears in a causal form, and so on, all the way to the eternity of God.

The term has been used extensively in modern times by the masters of Beas, in northern India. There is, perhaps, no better explanation than that given by Maharaj Sawan Singh in his letters to American disciples during the first half of the twentieth century. The real form of a master, he emphasizes, is the Word. The master is always with his disciples, at the centre of concentration and consciousness behind the eyes. This is where the inner journey starts:

> The Audible Life Stream which we call *Shabd* is the everlasting form of the Lord, and is always within every one of us. At the eye focus, it assumes the astral form of the master, and in this physical world it assumes the physical form of the master. . . .
>
> When you cross the 'solar system' (inner light resembling the sun and moon) and go beyond, you will find the master in his astral form, waiting for you and ready to take you up to higher regions. It is up to the disciple to reach that point, and after that it is the master's duty to take the soul up.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 64, SG pp.94–95*

> The devotee has his master with him in his eye focus. At the time of initiation, the master placed himself there in his astral form.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 55, SG p.86*

> The master is within you and is watching you, and will not leave you alone. He knows his part well and is playing it.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 195, SG pp.302–3*

> The master is with his disciples, in his astral form. You will be able to see and talk to him when you will go into the astral plane.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 66, SG p.96*

> The master, from the time of initiation, is within you and watches you and gives necessary guidance, all of which you do not see. When you will go with him and cross the stars, the sun, and the moon, and meet the radiant form of the master, he will talk to you as we talk to each other outside, and he will be with you always and answer all your enquiries.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 28, SG p.56*

To reach this inner form, the initiate begins by concentrating the attention at the eye focus or eye centre by repetition of five names given to him by the master at the time of initiation. This results in the withdrawal of the mind and consciousness from the body. When the soul leaves the body and enters the astral realm, the guidance and protection of the master are essential, for this realm – like the physical – is made up of mind energy, to which the mind of the disciple is readily attracted, leading the soul astray:

> The astral form of the master is at the eye focus and is always ready to give the necessary guidance. In the process of repetition, the limbs will become senseless first, as the attention is withdrawn from them. Later on, as the process of withdrawal proceeds, the trunk of the body becomes senseless. Ultimately the entire body below the eyes will become senseless. . . .
>
> All spirits that come in this way must be tested by repetition of the five names. As the whole astral plane is the manifestation of the negative power, and it is intended by that power to hold back the up-going spirit, so great caution is needed in crossing this plane. The astral form of the master guides there. The master, who is the embodiment of the positive power, will stand the five-name test.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Dawn of Light 64, DOL pp.170–71*

> The repetition of the five names by the mind in the eye centre brings in concentration, the contemplation on the radiant form of the master

> inside gives the power to stay there, and the Sound Current lifts upward. Therefore, give more time to repetition so long as the radiant form of the master has not been contacted. When the form appears, then give up repetition and concentrate on the form, and then the Sound Current will lead you upward, the radiant form acting as the guide.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 28, SG p.57*

The astral form has characteristics resembling the physical, but of a more subtle nature. Ultimately, a disciple sees the master everywhere and within everyone:

> The master has many forms – physical on the physical plane, radiant on the astral, and *Shabd* form on the top of *trikuṭī,* and then another in *sach khanḍ.* The radiant form resembles the physical form, and from this resemblance one distinguishes him inside, from others. Same is the case with the disciple. The physical form he leaves behind at the eye centre; with his astral form he travels the first region, and with his causal form the second region. The radiant form of the master enters into conversation as we converse in dreams. Dream is the nearest analogy, but we are dealing with the superconscious state.
>
> When you have made contact with that form, you will find the master present everywhere, and your mind will be so strong that it will be almost impossible for you to blame them when you look at the shortcomings of others. Your happiness will be independent of your surroundings. You will not be shaken by the ups and downs of the world.
>
> It should be the effort of every initiate to work up as best he can, to reach the eye centre and meet the radiant form, so that he stands as a pillar of strength, unmoved by the winds and storms of passions.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 84, SG p.116*

The first part of a disciple's work is therefore to focus within and to reach the inner master, from where he will ascend in the master's company to the divine Source:

> You ask for a message. The message is that you develop the power to withdraw your attention, at will, from the outward objects and from the physical body, and concentrate it in the eye focus. Enter the astral world, make contact with the astral form of the master, become very intimate with him, make him your companion, catch the Sound Current, cross the mind planes, and reach your eternal spiritual home in *sach khanḍ* (true region), so that your wanderings in the worlds of mind and matter may end. Do it now, while alive. This is the purpose of human life.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 89, SG pp.120–21*

> To reach the eye centre and cross the starry sky, the sun, and the moon, and come face to face with the radiant form of the master, is the duty of the disciple, whether he does it in this life or the next. It is his work and he is to do it. So why not do it now and why postpone it?
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 84, SG p.115*

The only thing that holds the consciousness down, preventing it from seeing the astral form of the master, is the burden of *karma* accumulated in past lives:

> The master, in his astral form, is waiting to receive you in the eye focus and is protecting you so far as is consistent with your karma, which needs to be washed off.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 95, SG p.125*

Even if a master dies, he does not leave his disciples. He is always with them, and they will automatically recognize him within, even if they have not met their master in his physical form:

> A dead master is not dead to his initiates. The disciples on earth have lost the benefit of his physical form, no doubt, and for that they must go to his successor. His astral form remains with them, and if they have access to their own eye centre they make contact with that form and get guidance from it on the inner planes. In case they have not entered the eye centre and their attention is confined to the physical plane, their efforts should be to reach the eye centre while receiving encouragement and guidance from the successor. Dead masters are not dead for their initiates, but they can not make new initiates. This is done by the living master.
>
> Suppose you see a form when awake or in dream and it poses as Christ, and asks you to do this or that and, let us say, foretells events which come out to be correct. How will you know that this form was really Jesus Christ? You have not seen him in physical form. The astral plane abounds in negative powers which can assume any form they like, and their aim is to deceive.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 105, SG pp.151–52*

> If one succeeds in establishing himself in the radiant form during his lifetime, he should consider himself lucky. He sits at the top of the physical world. There is nothing in this world with which this state can be compared. It stands by itself. It gives a unique type of peace.
>
> No limit can be placed as to how the master awakens souls with his astral form. Sometimes a person is in one country and the master is in another and the two have not met before. Even then the astral form

> of the master has gone to him, come in contact with him, awakened him, and talked to him. But full explanation and secret of the path is given only when they meet. The person, on meeting, realizes that he came in contact with this form at such and such a place.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 200, SG p.321*

> Although you are separated from my physical body, yet you are not away from my mind. The *satguru* in his sound form is taking proper care of you and is within you. When, by means of concentration, you have closed the nine portals of the body and have crossed the solar system, the master in his radiant form will reveal himself to you. He will talk to you in the same manner as you talk to people in this world, will answer all your questions, and will be with you all your life.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 76, SG p.106*

> If you work hard on the path, you need not come to India. The radiant form of the master will appear before you inwardly, talk to you, and answer all your questions.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 30, SG p.60*

> He is always with you even now, though you may not see him with physical eyes. By constant devotion to *bhajan* (meditation), time may come when you can see within yourself the radiant form of the master, and once you get it, you will be fully planted on the way that leads to God and eternal salvation.
>
> *Maharaj Sawan Singh, Spiritual Gems 69, SG p.99*

See also: **inner form**.

bar, **bar-i chūn sīm**, **sīmīn-bar**, **sīm-bar** (P) *Lit.* bosom *(bar),* breast; bosom *(bar)* like *(chūn)* silver *(sīm);* silvery *(sīmīn)* bosom *(bar);* in Sufi symbolism, the protection, care, and nurturing of the wayfarer on the path; a symbol of *rubūbīyah* (lordship), that aspect of the Divine that cherishes, nurtures, and sustains; hence, the care, protection, and sustenance given by the divine beloved. God as *Rabb* (Lord) implies the cherisher and sustainer, the teacher and nurturer, appearing as such in the opening verses of the *Qur'ān.*[1]

The metaphorical use of bosom is common to many languages, as in general expressions such as 'to clasp to one's bosom'. 'Bosom' can also be used synonymously with heart, meaning either the centre of feeling, consciousness or innermost being, depending on the context. Sometimes, in Sufi poetry, 'bosom' is more closely associated with the imagery of the beloved as a handsome man or beautiful woman, where the various parts of the face

and body convey specific meanings. Commonly, the silvery bosom implies the radiance of the inner beloved – which in Sufi language can imply either God or the spiritual form of the master. The radiant "bosom" is also referred to symbolically as his "cheek" or his "face":

> You are fairy faced, as fair as the moon,
> fragrant as jasmine, and with a silver-bright bosom *(sīmīn-bar).*
> It would be strange indeed
> if your face did not create a furore in the world.
>
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 72:4, KSSS p.363; cf. BOS p.82*

The bosom implies the security and comfort of being with the beloved within:

> My beloved friend shall return safely to me who am blind.
> Taking me to his bosom *(bar),* he will rest me there.
> Keeping my cheek on his cheek, he will give me the message of love.
>
> *ʿAbd al-Laṭīf, Shāh jo Risālo; cf. in ALMG p.43*

Mystic poets have commonly spoken of their longing to meet the inner beloved. Here, the feeling of distress at separation from him is epitomized as a pale face:

> Bare not your silvery bosom *(bar-i chūn sīm)*
> to the thieves in the marketplace,
> for I propose to bid for you
> with the cash of my sallow face.
>
> *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq, in TAT p.177; cf. in SSE1 p.20*

Rūmī represents this longing in a dialogue with the beloved, held in early morning meditation. Seek the security of my inner form ("cheek", "stature", "silvery bosom"), says the beloved, and forget your distress by drowning in the divine Ocean:

> Yesterday at dawn the beloved said to me in passing,
> "You are distraught and unaware; how long will this go on?
> My cheek is the envy of the rose,
> so why have you filled your eye with the heart's blood
> in quest of the thorn?"
>
> I said, "Before your stature the cypress is but a sapling!"
> I said, "Before your cheek the heavens' candle is dark!"
> I said, "Sky and earth are topsy-turvy on account of you:
> it is no wonder therefore, if I have no access to you."

He said, "I am your heart and soul, why are you distracted?
Speak not a word, but keep on weeping
against my silvery bosom *(sīm-bar).*"

I said, "You who have robbed my heart and soul of repose,
I have not the power to be still."
He said at once, "You are a drop of my Ocean, why go on speaking?
Become drowned, and fill the soul of the oyster shell with pearls."

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1022:10776–82, KSD2 p.271;
cf. MP1 (130:1–7) pp.110–11

The world, says Rūmī, has always had a beautiful, heartrending, "silver-bosomed", radiant master, who has guided seekers on the path to God:

How long will we sing like a dove looking for the way,
"*Kū kū* (Where? Where?)"?
That silver-bosomed beloved *(shāhid-i sīmīn-tan)*
is tearing this world to pieces.
Each moonlike witness *(shāhid)* has laid out a path;
Each is a king of kings,
each more beautiful than the one before.

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2:34725–26, KSD7 p.92; cf. in SPL p.290

1. *Qur'ān* 1:2.

bed Metaphorically, in mystic literature, the inner spiritual sanctum where the soul encounters the spiritual beloved or bridegroom; the spiritual sanctuary where the soul is united with the divine beloved; part of a family of metaphors associated with the bride, the bridegroom and the mystic marriage, whose usage is often inspired by the biblical *Song of Songs,* a song of love between the soul and the divine beloved, written entirely in metaphors.

In the *Song of Songs,* the lover (the soul) says of her beloved:

On my bed, at night, I sought him
whom my heart loves.
I sought but did not find him.

Song of Songs 3:1, JB

Elsewhere in the *Song of Songs,* the lover says, "All green is our bed,"[1] suggesting the divine bliss and comfort of the inner bed, a green pasture that the soul shares with the beloved. The French mystic Madame Guyon (1648–1717) supports the notion that the bed represents the inner sanctuary:

> Our bed,... that inner retreat in which you dwell in me, and which I call ours... – our bed is ready, and adorned with the flowers of a thousand virtues.
>
> *Madame Guyon, Commentary on the Song of Songs 1:15; cf. SSSE p.46*

The imagery of the *Song of Songs* is open to a variety of interpretations. Origen takes the bed to be the human body, which the soul shares with the bridegroom, the divine Word:

> The bed which she says she shares with the bridegroom seems to me to denote the soul's body; although the soul is still in the body, she has been considered worthy to be admitted to the company of the Word of God.
>
> *Origen, On the Song of Songs 3:2, OSS p.172*

For John of the Cross:

> The bed is nothing else but the Bridegroom himself, the Word, the Son of God, in whom, through the union of love, the bride reposes.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 23:Annotation, SCSB p.181*

When a person retires for the night, their thoughts withdraw from the world, they go upstairs, go to bed, and – when their thoughts have quietened down sufficiently – they fall asleep. Likewise, when a person sits in meditation, they withdraw their attention from the world and enter the inner spiritual sanctuary within their own being. The bed, therefore, not only symbolizes love – the meeting place of lover and beloved – but also withdrawal from the world. The only difference is that, for the divine lovers, withdrawal from the world and from the body leads to superconsciousness within – not to the unconsciousness of sleep. As the lover also says in the *Song of Songs,* "I sleep, but my heart is awake."[2]

Those who become absorbed in the love of the Lord learn to stay awake within in a superconscious state, travelling in the realms of spiritual consciousness. Or at least they sleep as little as possible, spending the remainder of the night in meditation. The bed is thus symbolic of both meditation in general, and also of the spiritual sanctuary, the bed and bedchamber of the bodily home.

This is clear in a biblical psalm of love and longing for the Lord. "On my bed I think of you, I meditate on you all night long," sings the psalmist, explicitly. The inner meeting place with the Beloved is also referred to as the "sanctuary", the holy of holies, the bed or bedchamber, within the temple of the body:

God, You are my God, I am seeking You,
my soul is thirsting for You,
my flesh is longing for You,
a land parched, weary, and waterless;
I long to gaze on You in the sanctuary,
and to see Your power and glory.

Your love is better than life itself,
my lips will recite Your praise;
All my life I will bless You,
in Your name lift up my hands;
My soul will feast most richly,
on my lips a song of joy and, in my mouth, praise.

On my bed, I think of You,
I meditate on You all night long,
for You have always helped me.
I sing for joy in the shadow of Your wings;
my soul clings close to You,
Your Right Hand supports me.

Psalm 63:1–8, JB

In the early Christian *Odes of Solomon,* probably dating from the first century CE, the poet, writing in the name of the saviour, expresses the same love when he says:

I laid upon them the yoke of my love:
But as the arm of the bridegroom upon the bride,
so is my yoke upon those who know me.
And as the bed that is spread in the bridal chamber,
so is my love for those who believe in me.

Odes of Solomon 42:7–9, OSD p.176

The love of a disciple for his master is deep and strong. It is "laid upon" the disciples like the yoke that binds the oxen to each other and to the plough. They have no option but to follow where they are led, nor would they wish otherwise. It is like the hand of the bridegroom claiming his bride. It leads to mystic consummation, divine union in the inner bed and bridal chamber.

See also: **bridal chamber**.

1. *Song of Songs* 2:16, *JB*.
2. *Song of Songs* 5:2, *JB*.

bedchamber See **bed**, **bridal chamber**.

beloved, **beloved one** (He. *dod*) One held dear; mystically, the divine beloved, referring to God or a spiritual master; in particular, the inner or spiritual form of a master; a term used throughout all mystic literature, where the beloved is generally the Lord or the master, and the soul is the lover; appears in a variety of other contexts, as when the beloved addresses the lover as his beloved, or disciples are addressed as beloved ones, the beloved of God, and so on. In Hebrew, the terms used are *yedid* (beloved, friend) and *dod* (beloved); in Arabic and Persian, terms used include *maḥbūb, maʿshūq* (A/P), *dilbar,* and *dūst* (P. friend); in Hindi and Punjabi, the usual terms are *pyārā* (H) and *piārā* (Pu).

In the Hebrew Bible, the book most renowned for its imagery of the lover and the beloved is the *Song of Songs.* Written entirely in metaphors, the *Song* has been open to a variety of interpretations. Some say it is simply a tale of worldly lovers. In Judaism, it is said to tell the story of the relationship of God to the children of Israel. In Christianity, it is interpreted as the love of Christ for his church or for the soul; or the soul is the lover and the beloved is the Christ within or the Word *(Logos)* or God Himself. Taking a more universal view, it is the story of the love between the soul and her inner beloved, the divine Word that she knows as her saviour or master in human form. Many verses in the *Song* could be chosen by way of example, as for instance:

> LOVER: I hear my beloved *(dod).*
> See how he comes,
> leaping on the mountains,
> bounding over the hills. . . .
> See where he stands
> behind our wall.
> He looks in at the window,
> he peers through the lattice.
>
> My beloved *(dod)* lifts up his voice,
> he says to me:
> BELOVED: "Come then, my love,
> my lovely one, come.
> For see, winter is past,
> the rains are over and gone.
>
> *Song of Songs 2:8–11, JB*

Understanding the meaning to be that of the soul and the inner master, the lover says that the beloved comes down from the heavenly realms ("mountains"). He takes his place within the soul, behind the inner darkness ("wall"),

so to speak, on the threshold of the inner heavens. He peers through the inner door ("window") at the soul of the human being locked in the cold darkness of the material winter, and encourages her to rise up in consciousness, and come to him.

Later, the beloved seems to have gone away to the inner heavens ("his garden"), the inner pastures where he tends his spiritual flock:

> Lover: My beloved went down to his garden,
> to the beds of spices,
> to pasture his flocks in the gardens
> and gather lilies.
> I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine:
> he pastures his flock among the lilies.
>
> *Song of Songs 6:2–3, JB*

The Christian mystical tradition has taken the biblical *Song of Songs* as an archetype of the love of the soul for the inner, divine beloved. When speaking of the love of the soul for the beloved, reference to the *Song* was standard if not mandatory practice. Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Bernard of Clairvaux, and others have written long and extensive commentaries on the *Song*. John of the Cross unashamedly took the *Song of Songs* as the inspiration for his *Spiritual Canticle,* in which he borrows and interprets much of the imagery of the *Song*. Teresa of Ávila, a contemporary of John of the Cross, also wrote a full commentary on the *Song*. But those were the days of the Inquisition, and Diego de Yangues, a renowned theologian and preacher, as well as St Teresa's confessor for some time, ordered her to burn her manuscript. He considered it an improper subject for a woman.

Thomas Aquinas is said to have died with hands joined, his eyes raised towards heaven, uttering the line from the *Song of Songs,* "Come my beloved, let us go to the fields (of heaven)."[1] Likewise Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, renowned for his erudition and holiness alike, although appearing to be in excellent health, died three days after expounding fifty aspects of divine love as described in the *Song of Songs.* He, too, is said to have died with a line from the *Song* on his lips: "Not death itself is so strong as Your love, my God."[2]

In reality, there is only one love – for "God is love,"[3] and He encompasses everything. The love of the soul for the Beloved is only the soul's response. Hence, the writer of the early Christian *Odes of Solomon,* says:

> I should not have known how to love the Lord
> if He had not loved me.
> For who is able to know love,
> except he who is loved?

I love the Beloved, and my soul loves Him,
and where His rest is, there too am I.

And I shall be no stranger at His door,
for there is no begrudging
with the Lord Most High and Merciful.
I have been united to Him,
because the lover has found the Beloved.

Odes of Solomon 3:3–7, OSD p.16

Understanding the beloved as the inner master, in the *Acts of Thomas,* Judas Thomas looks forward to meeting "him who is my beloved" (Jesus) when he is released from the body:

This which is called death is not death,
but a release from the body.
For which reason, I gladly receive
this release from the body:
That I may depart and see him
that is beautiful and full of mercy,
him that I love, him who is my beloved.

Acts of Thomas 160; cf. AAA pp.291–92, ANT p.434

Whether the beloved is the inner master or the Word, it comes to the same thing. For the Nestorian Christian Mār ʿAbd Yeshua, the beloved is the divine Word – God's "Son" or "Image":

> The Lord . . . poured forth and enlarged the goodness and grace of His divinity by sending His consubstantial Son. . . . In a befitting way, His will descended towards men: He sent His Beloved, the Begotten of Himself, that is, His very Image.
>
> *Mār ʿAbd Yeshua; cf. in NR2 p.39*

Origen writes that this beloved is to be seen with the inner spiritual eye:

> (The beloved) is said to be good and beautiful, and the more closely he can be contemplated with the eyes of the spirit, so much the lovelier and more beautiful is he found.
>
> *Origen, On the Song of Songs 3:2, OSS p.174*

Or as Richard Rolle puts it, "Contemplatives are almost always enjoying the embrace of their beloved."[4] Gregory of Nyssa says that he only found the beloved when he inwardly abandoned everything in creation:

> I abandoned all creatures, and passed by all that is intelligible in creation; and when I gave up every finite mode of comprehension, then it was that I found my beloved.
>
> *Gregory of Nyssa, On Canticles 6, PG44 cols.888c ff., GGG p.202*

In his various writings, John of the Cross also identifies the beloved as the divine Word. In his *Spiritual Canticle,* he writes:

> the sonorous rivers, the whisper of amorous breezes,
> the tranquil night, at the time of the rising of the dawn,
> the silent Music, the sounding Solitude,
> the supper that recreates and enkindles love.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 13–14, CWJC2 p.72*

In his commentary on the verse, he writes that in the tranquillity and silence of the night, the lover listens to the silence and "quiet intelligence" of the "sonorous rivers", the "silent Music" or the "sounding Solitude" of the Word:[5]

> The bride calls this Music silent because . . . it is a tranquil and quiet intelligence, without sound of voices; and in it are thus enjoyed both the sweetness of the music and the quiet of the silence. And so she says that her beloved is this silent Music, because this harmony of spiritual Music is known and experienced in Him.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 13–14:25, CWJC2 p.85*

And again:

> Inasmuch as the soul receives this sounding Music, not without solitude and withdrawal from all outward things, she calls them the silent Music and the sounding Solitude. This, she says, is her beloved.
>
> *John of the Cross, Spiritual Canticle 13–14:27, CWJC2 p.86*

The twelfth-century Hugh of St Victor writes in a dialogue of the invisible manner in which the spiritual beloved may be experienced, before he is actually seen with the inner eye:

> THE SOUL: What is that sweet thing that comes sometimes to touch me at the thought of God? It affects me with such vehemence and sweetness that I begin wholly to go out of myself and to be lifted up, whither I know not. Suddenly I am renewed and changed; it is a state of inexpressible well-being. My consciousness rejoices, my mind becomes clearer, my heart is enflamed, my desires are satisfied. I feel myself transported into a new place, I know not where.

I grasp something interiorly as if with the embrace of love. I do not know what it is, and yet I strive with all my strength to hold it and not to lose it. I struggle deliciously to prevent myself leaving this thing which I desire to embrace forever, and I exult with ineffable intensity, as if I had at last found the goal of all my desires. I seek for nothing more. I wish for nothing more. All my aspiration is to continue at the point that I have reached. Is it my beloved? Tell me, I pray you, if this be he, that, when he return, I may conjure him not to depart, and to establish in me his permanent dwelling place?

THE MAN: Yes, it is truly your beloved who visits you. But he comes invisible, hidden, incomprehensible. He comes to touch you, not to be seen; to intimate his presence to you, not to be understood; to make you taste of him, not to pour himself out in his entirety; to draw your affection, not to satisfy your desire; to bestow the first fruits of his love, not to communicate it in its fullness.

Behold in this the most certain pledge of your future marriage: that you are destined to see him and to possess him eternally, because he already gives himself to you at times to taste, with what sweetness you know. Therefore, in the times of his absence you should console thyself, and during his visits you should renew your courage, which is ever in need of heartening.… In conclusion, I ask you to think of none but him, love none but him, listen to none but him, take hold of none but him, possess none but him.

Hugh of Victor, De Arrha Animae; cf. in GIP p.109

Ramón Lull writes of the intensity of love between the soul and the beloved:

They asked the lover where his beloved was. "See him for yourselves," he answered, "in a nobler house than all the nobility of creation; but see him too in my love, my griefs, and my tears."

They said to the lover: "Where are you going?" He answered: "I come from my beloved." "From where have you come?" "I go to my beloved." "When will you return?" "I shall be with my beloved." "How long will you be with your beloved?" "For as long as my thoughts remain on him."…

Whether lover and beloved are near or far is all one; for their love mingles as water mingles with wine. They are linked as heat with light; they agree and are as closely united as Essence and Being.

Ramón Lull, Lover and the Beloved 24–25, 50; cf. BLB pp.23, 27

From four centuries before the birth of Jesus, Plato, through his mouthpiece Socratēs, describes the beauty of both the outer and the inner form of the divine beloved, and the effect upon an initiate:

> The man who is not fresh from his initiation or who has been corrupted does not quickly make the transition from beauty on earth to absolute Beauty.... But the newly initiated, who has had a full sight of the celestial vision, when he beholds a godlike face or a physical form that truly reflects ideal Beauty, first of all shivers and experiences something of the dread which the vision itself inspired; next he gazes upon it and worships it as if it were a god, and, if he were not afraid of being thought an utter madman, he would sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a divinity. Then, as you would expect after a cold fit, his condition changes and he falls into an unaccustomed sweat; he receives through his eyes the emanation of Beauty.
>
> *Plato, Phaedrus 250e–251b; cf. PPL pp.57–58*

As this divine emanation falls upon the soul, the plumage of the soul's spiritual wings, which it had lost, begins once more to grow, "For in its original state the soul was feathered all over." And as the roots of each feather, closed by the drought of separation, "swells and strives to grow", the soul enters "a state of ferment and throbbing". Plato is describing the intense longing – a mixture of pain and joy – that floods over a soul upon glimpsing the divine beloved:

> In this condition, the soul gazes upon the beauty of its beloved, and is fostered and warmed by the emanations that flood upon it – that is why we speak of a 'flood' of longing – and it wins relief from its pain and is glad.... Imprisoned below the surface together with the flood of longing,... each embryo feather throbs like a pulse and presses against its proper outlet, so that the soul is driven mad by the pain of the pricks in every part, and yet feels gladness because it preserves the memory of the beauty of its darling.
>
> In this state of mingled pleasure and pain, the sufferer is perplexed by the strangeness of his experience and struggles helplessly. In his frenzy he cannot sleep at night or remain still by day, but his longing drives him wherever he thinks that he may see that possessor of Beauty. When he sees him and his soul is refreshed by the flood of emanations, the closed passages are unstopped; he obtains a respite from his pains and pangs, and there is nothing to equal the sweetness of the pleasure which he enjoys in that moment.
>
> *Plato, Phaedrus 251c–251e; cf. PPL p.58*

In this state, the initiate forgets everything in his longing to be with his beloved:

> From this state he never willingly emerges. In his eyes, no one can compare with his beloved; mother, brothers, friends, all are forgotten,

> and if his property is lost through his negligence he thinks nothing of it; the conventions of civilized behaviour, on whose observance he used to pride himself, he now scorns; he is ready to be a slave and to make his bed as near as he is allowed to the object of his passion; for besides the reverence which he feels for the possessor of Beauty, he has found in him the only physician for sickness of the most grievous kind.
>
> *Plato, Phaedrus 251e–252b; cf. PPL pp.58–59*

See also: **beloved** (▸4), **lover** (▸4).

1. *Song of Songs* 7:12, *JB.*
2. *Song of Songs* 8:6. The accounts of Thomas Aquinas and Jean Gerson are both mentioned by François de Sales (*Love of God* 7:9, in *e.g. LG* p.297).
3. *1 John* 4:8, 16, *KJV.*
4. Richard Rolle, *Fire of Love* 21, *FLRR* p.110.
5. John of the Cross, *Spiritual Canticle* 13–14:9, *CWJC2* p.76.

bridal chamber, **bridal chambers of the Height**, **bridal chambers of light**, **bedchamber**, **bridechamber** The inner sanctum where the marriage of the bride (the soul) and the bridegroom (the saviour, the divine beloved) is consummated; the spiritual holy of holies where the soul is united with the divine beloved; a private, inner spiritual space, where the world does not intrude; more generally, the spiritual or heavenly realms; part of the family of metaphors associated with the bride, the bridegroom and the mystic marriage, whose usage is often inspired by the biblical *Song of Songs,* a song of love between the soul and the divine beloved, written entirely in metaphors.

There are a number of places in the Christian gospels that refer to this divine marriage, as in the parables of the marriage of the king's son,[1] the wise and foolish virgins,[2] the wedding party at Cana, and elsewhere in *John.*[3] In these, the marriage represents the inner union of the soul with the divine beloved. In *Matthew,* when Jesus is asked why the disciples of John the Baptist fast and grieve, while his disciples do not, he refers to himself as the bridegroom and his disciples as the "children of the bridechamber", his intimate companions. He says:

> Can the children of the bridechamber mourn,
> as long as the bridegroom is with them?
> But the days will come,
> when the bridegroom shall be taken from them,
> and then shall they fast.
>
> *Matthew 9:15, KJV*

But it is the *Song of Songs* that has provided the greatest inspiration to later users of the imagery. "The king has brought me into his chamber (He. *ḥeder*)," [4] sings the lover, referring to the beloved's private room, his spiritual bedchamber. And again, after the lover had been seeking her beloved:

> I found him whom my soul loves.
> I held him fast, nor would I let him go
> till I had brought him into my mother's house,
> into the chamber *(ḥeder)* of her who had conceived me.
>
> *Song of Songs 3:4; cf. JB, KJV*

Here, the "mother" who gave birth to the soul is the divine Wisdom or creative power, the metaphor being used elsewhere in the biblical wisdom literature.[5] In Christian literature, the mother is the Holy Spirit,[6] which is another name for the same power.

The metaphor of the bedchamber is aptly chosen. It is a place of both rest and love, an intimate place away from the eyes of the world. The bedchamber is also the place to which a person retires at night, leaving behind the thoughts of the world. In the same way, when the soul withdraws from the body in contemplation, it at first seeks peace and rest in the darkness within. Thoughts of the world are relinquished, and the mind is stilled. Drawn on by an ever-deepening love, as the attention withdraws more completely, the soul becomes increasingly conscious of the presence of the Divine within itself. It realizes that the seemingly inner darkness of its being is actually light, and within this spiritual light it encounters the beloved. The meeting is secret, intimate, and permeated by divine love. The soul has entered the spiritual realms; consciousness has risen above the physical body; and the soul has met the spiritual form of the bridegroom, the saviour, and is united with him in pure spiritual love.

Some sense of this intimate indwelling companionship with the beloved is given by Richard of Victor. First, he refers to the Vulgate translation of *Deuteronomy:*

> Benjamin, the most beloved of the Lord, shall live in Him fearlessly, shall dwell the whole day as if in a bridal chamber, and shall rest in His arms.
>
> *Deuteronomy 33:12, in RVTP p.143; cf. DRB*

Later, he comments:

> What does it mean that the soul goes into itself, except that it gathers itself completely within itself? . . . And so when the soul enters with her beloved into the bedchamber, she alone delaying and enjoying the sweetness with him alone, this is nothing other than that she forgets

> all external things and delights in supreme and intimate love of him. She sees herself alone with the beloved, when, after having forgotten all exterior things, she aims her longing away from consideration of herself and toward love of her beloved.
>
> And on account of these things that she considers in her innermost places, she kindles her soul with such affection and rises up with thanksgiving from the consideration of both her goods and her evils.... The beloved is led into the innermost place and situated in the best place, when he is loved from innermost affection and above all else.
>
> *Richard of Victor, Benjamin Major 4:16, RVTP p.287*

Ilias the Presbyter also speaks of the intimacy of inner contemplation upon the beloved:

> The mind *(nous)* that encloses itself within its own thoughts *(dianoia)* during prayer is like a bridegroom conversing with the bride inside the bridal chamber. But the mind *(nous)* that is not allowed to enter stands dejectedly outside, crying: "'Who will lead me into the walled city?'[7] Who will guide me until I no longer see vanities and delusions during prayer?"
>
> *Ilias the Presbyter, Gnomic Anthology 67, Philokalia; cf. PCT3 p.56*

John Klimakos is practical. Worldly attachment, self-interest, and spiritual vanity must be overcome before entry is permitted to the "heavenly bridechamber":

> No one can enter crowned into the heavenly bridechamber without first making the three renunciations. He has to turn away from worldly concerns, from men, from family; he must cut selfishness away; and thirdly, he must rebuff the vanity that follows obedience.
>
> *John Klimakos, Ladder of Ascent 2, LDAC p.83*

The imagery is commonly found among the gnostic and allied literature of the period. Making a rare appearance in the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas,* Jesus contrasts the "true" and eternal marriage of the soul and God with the transitory marriage of this world:

> You shall be... looking forward to receive
> that incorruptible and true marriage,
> And you shall be therein companions of the bridegroom,
> entering with him into that bridal chamber,
> which is full of immortality and light.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 12; cf. ANT pp.369–70, ANTW p.395*

Among the gnostic texts, the bridal chamber is again the mystical trysting place of the soul and the beloved. The enigmatic *Gospel of Philip,* which explores the spiritual and metaphorical meaning of many rituals, symbols and concepts such as baptism, redemption and resurrection, says that the inner bridal chamber is symbolized by the holy of holies in the Temple at Jerusalem. But that is merely a reflection of the true bridal chamber within:

> Redemption takes place in the bridal chamber. But the bridal chamber is within a realm superior to anything known to us, and you cannot find any parallel in this world.... This bridal chamber is the image of the bridal chamber above.
>
> *Gospel of Philip 69–70; cf. NHS20 pp.180–81, NHSM p.175*

In an allegorical tale related in the *Expository Treatise on the Soul,* when the pure and virginal soul – who has fallen into the world of matter, becoming entirely polluted by material entanglements (her "adulterers") – finally turns again to God, then:

> She gave up her former prostitution and cleansed herself of the pollutions of the adulterers, and she was renewed so as to be a bride. She cleansed herself in the bridal chamber; she filled it with perfume; and she sat there awaiting the true bridegroom.
>
> *On the Soul 132; cf. NHS21 pp.154–55*

In the *Dialogue of the Saviour,* Jesus indicates that purity of heart is required for entry to the bridal chamber:

> The master said, "...When you rid yourselves of jealousy, then you will clothe yourselves in light and enter the bridal chamber."
>
> *Dialogue of the Saviour 138; cf. NHS26 pp.77, NHSM p.308*

The same meaning is implied in the *Gospel of Thomas,* when Jesus says that only a single-pointed mind can enter within. The "door" is the single eye or focus within the head where the soul leaves the body, either in meditation or at death:

> Many wait at the door, but only those who come alone can enter the bridal chamber.
>
> *Gospel of Thomas 46:75; cf. NHS20 pp.80–81, NHSM p.149*

In the Manichaean psalms, there are again many clear references to the inner bridal chambers. Associated with these are also many places where the

devotees express their longing to be with the inner beloved, often called the "image (Gk. *eikōn*)", which is encountered in the "bridal chambers that are full of light". This all takes place in spiritual consciousness within:

> Let me be worthy of your bridal chambers that are full of light.
> Jesus Christ, my saviour, receive me into your bridal chambers. . . .
> I am a maiden (devotee), unspotted and holy.
> Let me see your image, my holy father,
> which I saw before the world was created. . . .
> Christ, take me into your bridal chambers. . . .
> Let me rejoice in all the bridal chambers,
> and give me the crown of the holy ones.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXIII; cf. MPB pp.79–80*

And similarly:

> Take me into your bridal chambers,
> that I may chant with them that sing to you.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.117, in MEM p.109*

And again:

> Have mercy on my poverty, have compassion upon my sins;
> Teach me the way to Life that I may come to you rejoicing.
> I will dwell in your aeons, your bridal chambers of light.
> Hearken to my cry, hear my prayer.
> Glory to you my God, and your Father on high.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.197*

In another psalm, the devotee exhorts his fellow disciples, the "sons of light", to exert themselves on the spiritual path in order that they may be taken up into the "bridal chamber":

> Fight, O sons of light:
> yet a little while and you will be victorious.
> He that shirks his burden will forfeit his bridal chamber. . . .
> I have become divine again, even as I was.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCXLIX, MPB p.58*

In other psalms, the soul describes being taken up out of this world of death into the bridal chambers, being cleansed of all sins, and filled with Living Water from the "Fountain that is full of Life":

My saviour has not deserted me,
he has sated me from his Fountain
that is full of Life. . . .
I have cast away from my eyes
this sleep of death that is full of error. . . .

The cleansing of immortality –
I have been cleansed therein by the hands of the Holy Ones.
They summon me to the bridal chambers of the Height:
I will go up clothed in the robe.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXI; cf. MPB pp.75–76

In a similar vein:

Christ, my bridegroom, has taken me to his bridal chamber,
I have rested with him in the land of the immortal.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCLIII; cf. MPB p.63

And again:

O Firstborn (Son), I have become a holy bride
in the bridal chambers of light that are at rest,
I have received the gifts of the victory.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXIV; cf. MPB p.81

And praising the "true bridegroom", who has taken the soul into the light:

Glory to you, my true bridegroom,
Christ of the bridal chambers of light,
and all his holy elect.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXXXI; cf. MPB p.102

The same expressions are commonly found in the early Christian liturgies, especially those of the Eastern branches of the church. One reads, for example, of the "bridal chamber – a spiritual one" that has been inextricably "knotted" to the "church", to all disciples in the community of the saviour's followers:

A bridal chamber, our Lord has knotted to his church – a spiritual one.

Chaldaean Breviary, BCB1 p.407; cf. in MEM p.116

More specifically, the soul is addressed as the "bride" for which the saviour, the "son of the king", has built a "glorified bridal chamber" – the secret sanctuary within, where the soul meets the spiritual form of the saviour:

> In the holy of holies, which cannot be described,
> the son of the king has built a glorified bridechamber for his bride.
> *Chaldaean Breviary, BCB3 p.425; cf. in MEM p.116*

Ephraim Syrus also uses the same imagery in his hymns:

> The bridal chamber that fails not, my brethren, you have received....
> Your vesture is shining, and goodly your crowns....
> Crowns that fade not away are set on your heads....
> Who would not rejoice in your bridal chamber, my brethren?
> *Ephraim Syrus, Hymn of the Baptized XIII:3, 5, 11, 13; cf. HEDA p.283*

See also: **bed**, **beloved**, **bride** (▸4), **bridegroom**, **divine marriage** (▸3), **sanctuary** (▸3), **virgin** (▸4).

1. *Matthew* 22:1–14.
2. *Matthew* 25:1–12.
3. *John* 2:1–11, 3:29.
4. *Song of Songs* 1:4; *cf. KJV.*
5. *E.g. Wisdom of Solomon* 7:12; *Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach* 15:2.
6. See **Mother** (3.1).
7. *Psalms* 60:9.

bridegroom Mystically, the divine beloved, as God, the divine Word, or the spiritual form of the master; a part of the family of metaphors associated with the mystic marriage (union of the soul with God), which includes the bride (the loving soul), the bed or bridal chamber (the inner sanctuary where the soul meets the inner beloved), and so on; readily understandable imagery, found in practically all mystic traditions.

In Christianity, the bridegroom and the bride are sometimes Christ and the church, sometimes the Christ and the soul. In both cases, Christ as the bridegroom is understood as the divine Word, the mystical, Only-begotten Son of God. In rabbinic Judaism, the bridegroom is God and the bride is generally Israel.

The Christian gospels themselves contain only a few references to the bridegroom, Jesus' parable of the bridegroom and the ten virgins (disciples) being the most extensive example. Here, five disciples attend to their spiritual practice and are ready at the time of death to be united with the bridegroom. They go in with him to the spiritual marriage. The other five are lazy and inattentive, and are denied entry.[1]

In *Matthew,* when Jesus is asked why the disciples of John the Baptist fast and grieve, while his disciples do not, he refers to himself as the

bridegroom and his disciples as the "children of the bridechamber", his intimate companions:

> Can the children of the bridechamber mourn,
> as long as the bridegroom is with them?
> But the days will come,
> when the bridegroom shall be taken from them,
> and then shall they fast.
>
> *Matthew 9:15, KJV*

He means that when a master is with his disciples inside or outside, then they eat and drink their fill of his spiritual 'food', intoxicated with his divine company. But after his departure from this world, even if they are in touch with him inside, then they will "fast" – then they will grieve.

In *John,* using the same metaphor, John the Baptist says:

> He that has the bride is the bridegroom:
> But the friend of the bridegroom,
> who stands by and hears him,
> rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's Voice:
> Thus, therefore, is my joy complete.
>
> *John 3:29; cf. KJV*

Here, the bride is the Word or God and Jesus is the bridegroom. Jesus is happy because he is united with the bride. He is one with the Divine. But the friends of the bridegroom, the disciples of the master, are also happy because they hear the "Voice" of the bridegroom – the sound or music of the divine Word, the Voice of God. Or, humanly, the disciples of the master become happy simply listening to the human voice of their beloved, for he speaks with such wisdom, kindness, love, and humour. Either way, disciples are filled with gratitude to their master for giving them the taste of such real inward happiness. They "rejoice greatly". The passage is a good example of the double meanings used throughout John's gospel, where outer incidents are used as metaphors or allegories for an inner meaning.

The epithet is commonly encountered among the Christian apocryphal literature, as in the *Acts of John.* The intensity of love in this spiritual union may be glimpsed when John says:

> Join yourselves together in an inseparable marriage,
> holy and true, waiting for the one true
> incomparable bridegroom from heaven,
> even Christ, the everlasting bridegroom.
>
> *Acts of John (fragment), ANT p.266*

Again, in an early Christian Nestorian hymn, it is clear that this "bridegroom" is spiritual, not physical:

> The bridegroom in his chamber
> is like the sun that rises in the East,
> whose rays pervade the firmament,
> and whose light gives joy to the creation.
>
> The bridegroom in his chamber
> is like the Tree of Life in the church,
> whose fruits are good for food,
> and whose leaves for medicine.
>
> The bridegroom in his chamber
> is like the spring that runs through Eden,
> of which the wise have drunk,
> and by which even the foolish have obtained knowledge.
>
> The bridegroom in his chamber
> is like an unblemished pearl,
> which the chief merchants bought,
> and through which they were enriched and ennobled.
>
> *Nestorian Hymn, in SPZ p.732; cf. in MEM p.118, NR2 p.275*

Here, the sun, the light, the fruit, the food, the leaves, the medicine, the river and the pearl are all metaphors for the divine Word, the treasure of spirituality that all souls seek. The "bridegroom in his chamber" is not only the spiritual form of the beloved encountered in the spiritual realms, he is also the focus of the devotee's inner worship and love. The rendezvous with this beautiful and radiant form of the beloved is the first goal to which the devotee aspires.

Such love creates an eternal bond between the soul and the beloved. In the *Odes of Solomon,* probably dating from the first century CE, the poet, writing in the name of the saviour, likens the nature of this bond to that between the "bride" and the "bridegroom":

> I laid upon them the yoke of my love:
> But as the arm of the bridegroom upon the bride,
> so is my yoke upon those who know me.
> And as the bed that is spread in the bridal chamber,
> so is my love for those who believe in me.
>
> *Odes of Solomon 42:7–9, OSD p.176*

The love of the disciple for the master is deep and strong. It is "laid upon" disciples like the yoke that binds oxen to each other and to the plough. They have no option but to follow where they are led, nor would they wish otherwise. It is like the strong hand of the bridegroom claiming his bride. It is full of feeling and spiritual emotion, like the "bridal chamber". But the bond is always one of love; no force is ever applied. As a Manichaean psalmist writes:

> My bridegroom has taken me to his bridal chamber:
> I have rested with him in the land of the immortal.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCLIII, MPB p.63*

The bridegroom is a familiar image among these Manichaean psalms in Coptic, which often refer to Jesus' parable of the ten virgins. In one, Wisdom, Living Fire and the *Nous* of Light are all terms for the divine Word, experienced as divine light and music, and depicted as the bridegroom:

> Lo, Wisdom is flourishing:
> but where is there an ear to hear it?...
> Lo, the Living Fire has come,
> we would have lamps to light.
> Lo, the wise virgins,
> they have put oil into their lamps.
> Lo, the bridegroom has come:
> where is the bride who is like him?
>
> The bride is the church,
> the bridegroom is the *Nous* of Light.
> The bride is the soul,
> the bridegroom is Jesus.
> My brethren, let us purify ourselves from all pollution,
> for we know not the hour when the bridegroom will summon us.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB pp.153–54*

Another psalm alludes to a number of Jesus' parables, including that of the bridegroom and the ten virgins:

> It is Jesus that we seek,
> on whom we have modelled ourselves....
> We knocked at the door, the door was opened to us,
> we went in with the bridegroom....
> We were numbered among the virgins
> in whose lamps oil was found....

> The true path we have found…
> we have found the way to the Height.
> We have found the treasure that is in the skies,
> wherein is no decay.
> We have found a rest that has no toil,
> a joy wherein there is no grief….
> We have found a treasure that cannot be taken from us,
> a gain wherein there is no loss.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB pp.170–71*

The epithet is also found among the gnostic texts. In an allegory related in the *Expository Treatise on the Soul,* the soul is sent out from God into the creation, where she becomes a prostitute – metaphorically speaking. Giving her love and attention to all and sundry, she forgets her divine home, and everyone takes advantage of her, giving nothing in return. Ultimately, reaching her lowest point, she begins to realize what has happened to her, and prays to God for deliverance. God then responds by sending His Son, the *Logos,* as her brother or bridegroom:

> From heaven, the Father sent her her Man, who is her brother, the firstborn. Then the bridegroom came down to the bride. She gave up her former prostitution and cleansed herself of the pollutions of the adulterers, and she was renewed so as to be a bride. She cleansed herself in the bridal chamber; she filled it with perfume; and she sat there awaiting the true bridegroom. No longer does she run about the market place (the world), copulating with whomever she desires, but she continued to wait for him, saying, "When will he come?" – and to fear him. For she did not know what he looked like: she no longer remembers since the time she fell from her Father's house…. And she dreamed of him like a woman in love with a man.
>
> *On the Soul 132, NHS21 pp.154–57*

The brother, the bridegroom or the master comes "down to the bride", and she is revitalized and purified so that she is once more enabled to become a pure bride. "She cleansed herself in the bridal chamber" means that she focused her mind in the inner sanctum and purified it of all downward tendencies of the mind and senses. She sits in her bedchamber, filled with the perfume of true spirituality, awaiting the inner coming of the bridegroom – perfume or fragrance being an allusion to the Word. However, she no longer remembers what the spiritual form of her beloved looks like, for she has been separated from her Father for so long. All the same, she develops an ardent longing to meet this radiant form, thinking and dreaming of him incessantly and with great intensity. The desire to meet with the inner beloved becomes a divine obsession.

In another Nag Hammadi text, the *Authoritative Teaching,* the story of the soul is told in another way. Sadly, the early part of the document is unrecoverable, and though the bridegroom brings some gift to the soul, the precise nature of the gift is missing. From its effect, however, it is clearly a symbol for the spiritual gift of initiation or baptism, because it opens the inner vision of the soul, permitting her to seek her divine Source, and come into conscious contact with "her branch" – the Tree of Life or divine Word. She also meets her "kinsmen" – either the spiritual form of her master or other advanced souls that already have access to or are dwelling in the inner realms:

> Secretly her bridegroom fetched it (the gift). He presented it to her mouth to make her eat it like food, and he applied the Word to her eyes as a medicine to make her see with her mind and perceive her kinsmen and learn about her root, in order that she might cling to her branch, from which she had come forth, in order that she might receive what is (truly) hers and renounce matter.
>
> *Authoritative Teaching 22, NHS11 pp.260–61*

In mainstream Christianity, the bridegroom is invariably the inner spiritual Christ as the divine Word, the single mystical Son of the Father. Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Bernard of Clairvaux, François de Sales, Jan van Ruysbroek, John of the Cross and many others have been explicit on this point. The *Macarian Homilies* are also clear that this inner bridegroom is spiritual: it is seen with inner eyes and heard with inner ears:

> Something that all should realize is that there are eyes more inward than these physical eyes and hearing more inward than this hearing. Just as these eyes sensibly behold and recognize the face of a friend or loved one, so also the eyes of the worthy and faithful soul, being spiritually enlightened by the divine light, behold and recognize the true friend, the sweetest and greatly longed-for Bridegroom, the Lord, while the soul is completely illuminated by the adorable Spirit. And thus, beholding with the mind the desirable and only inexpressible Beauty, it is smitten with a passionate love of God, and is directed into the way of all the virtues of the Spirit. And thus it possesses an unbounded, unfailing love for the Lord it longs for.
>
> *Macarian Homilies 28:5; cf. FSHM p.185, SHME p.216*

Often, the imagery of the bridegroom is linked to the biblical *Song of Songs,* although in fact the *Song* gives no particular title to the focus of the soul's devotion. He is the king, the shepherd or the beloved, depending on the context. Commenting on the verse "I come into my garden, my sister, my promised bride,"[2] François de Sales equates the beloved or bridegroom

with the divine Word or Wisdom, described in *Proverbs* as delighting in the company of human beings:

> Into his garden, the divine Bridegroom comes, when he visits a devoted soul. Since his "delight" is to mix "with the sons of Adam",[3] what more fitting abode can await him than the garden of a soul wearing his own image and likeness? In that garden, his own hands have planted the gratifying love we have for his goodness, the love on which we feed. His goodness, too, delights and feeds on our gratification. This, in turn, grows as we become aware that God is pleased to see that we find our contentment in him.
>
> *François de Sales, Love of God 5:2, LGFS p.184*

The *Song of Songs* also describes how the beloved comes and goes,[4] creating a deeper longing in the soul. Such longing purifies the soul, and intensifies her love. Commenting on this, Origen provides a rare insight into his own personal mystical experience:

> The bride then beholds the bridegroom; and he, as soon as she has seen him, goes away. He does this frequently throughout the *Song;* and that is something nobody can understand who has not suffered it himself. God is my witness that I have often perceived the bridegroom drawing near me and being most intensely present with me. Then suddenly he has withdrawn and I could not find him, though I sought to do so. I long, therefore, for him to come again, and sometimes he does so. Then, when he has appeared and I lay hold of him, he slips away once more; and, when he has so slipped away, my search for him begins anew. So does he act with me repeatedly, until in truth I hold him and go up, "leaning on my nephew's (beloved's) arm".[5]
>
> *Origen, On the Song of Songs 1:7, OSS pp.279–80*

"God is love,"[6] and the Word is God.[7] Hence, Bernard of Clairvaux says, "The bridegroom is not only loving; he *is* love."[8] This is why, he continues, although the soul may respond with all the love she has, it never compares to the fountain of divine love flowing from the spiritual bridegroom:

> Rightly, then, does she renounce all other affections and devote herself to love alone, for it is in returning love that she has the power to respond to love. Although she may pour out her whole self in love, what is that compared to the inexhaustible fountain of his love? The stream of love does not flow equally from her who loves and from him who is love, the soul and the Word, the bride and the Bridegroom, the Creator and the creature – any more than a thirsty man can be compared to a fountain.
>
> *Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs 83:6, WBC4 pp.185–86*

Jan van Ruysbroek relates how the joy felt by the soul in response to the bridegroom's love is beyond description. It is not only a second coming but an eternal coming, a constant renewal of his divine presence:

> The coming of the bridegroom is so swift that he comes unceasingly, always dwelling within us with all his incalculable riches – ever coming anew, in his own person, without interruption, with such fresh brightness that it seems as though he had never come before. For his coming subsists, beyond time, in an eternal Now, which is unceasingly received with new joy and new delight.
>
> Behold, the gladness and the joy, which the bridegroom brings with him in his coming, are boundless and immeasurable, for so he is himself. And this is why the eyes, with which the spirit contemplates and gazes at its bridegroom, are opened so wide that they may never close again. For the spirit continues to behold and contemplate forever the hidden revelation of God. And the understanding of the spirit is opened up so wide for the coming in of the bridegroom that the spirit itself becomes that vastness which it apprehends. And so God is apprehended and contemplated through God Himself, in whom lies all our blessedness. This is . . . how we ceaselessly receive, in our spirit, the eternal coming of our bridegroom.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Spiritual Espousals 3:4; cf. SER pp.183–84, SSJR pp.170–71*

But to experience this eternal coming, the soul must be entirely dedicated to God, seeking to be with Him above all else:

> Whosoever wishes to meet Christ as his beloved bridegroom, and to dwell in him and with him forever, may in time go forward to meet with Christ. There are, however, three prerequisites for this. The first is that he shall keep God in mind in all things through which we earn eternal life. The second is he shall not be intent upon anything or love anything more than God or even as much as God. And the third is that he shall seek to rest in God with utmost devotion, above all creatures and above all God's gifts, above all works of virtue, and above all feelings that God may infuse into the soul and the body.
>
> *Jan van Ruysbroek, Spiritual Espousals 1:32; cf. SER p.78, SSJR p.43*

The experience of inner communion with the beloved is powerful beyond all other experiences. Hence the compelling and lyrical praise of the experience in the *Macarian Homilies:*

> Oh, what precious pearls in the flow of blessed tears!
> Oh, that immediate and ready hearing!

Oh, what a strong, wise mind!
Oh, the intensity of the love of the Lord's Spirit
that moves so strongly toward the unsullied bridegroom!
Oh, what concentration of desire in the soul for God the Word!
Oh, what intimate communion of the bride with the heavenly bridegroom!
Macarian Homilies 25:8; cf. FSHM p.163, SHME p.183

Alfred Tennyson also writes of the longing that draws the soul in to the beloved, speaking of the flashes of light and seemingly starry heavens that he crosses on the way:

Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
in raiment white and clean.
He lifts me to the golden doors –
the flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
and strews her lights below,
And deepens on and up! the gates
roll back, and far within
For me the heavenly bridegroom waits,
to make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
one sabbath deep and wide –
A light upon the shining sea –
the bridegroom with his bride!
Alfred Tennyson, St Agnes' Eve 23–36

See also: **beloved**, **bridal chamber**, **bride** (▸4), **spiritual marriage** (▸3), **virgin** (▸4).

1. *Matthew* 25:1–12; see **virgin** (▸4).
2. *Song of Songs* 5:1, *JB.*
3. *Proverbs* 8:31.
4. *Song of Songs* 3:1–4, 5:1–8, 6:1–2.
5. *Song of Songs* 8:5, *LXX.*
6. *1 John* 4:8, 16, *KJV.*
7. *John* 1:1.
8. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the Song of Songs* 83:4, *WBC4* p.183.

būs, **būsah** (P) *Lit.* kiss; in Sufi symbolism, where the divine beloved is commonly portrayed as a beautiful woman, a moment of attraction, closeness or union between the lover and the divine beloved; an experience of the inner grace,

blessings, kindness, and mercy of the beloved;[1] a moment of comprehension of the inner mysteries;[2] often linked with the imagery of the lips *(lab)* or ruby lips *(lab-i laʿl)* of the beloved.

Rūmī, as ever, makes the meaning clear. Though the inner beloved may bestow a "kiss", he has "no mouth". The "kiss" to which he is referring is clearly not of this world:

> I have never seen anything like your image *(khayāl):*
> it kisses *(būsah),* yet it has no mouth!
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 698:7278, KSD2 p.91; cf. in SPL p.303*

Such a kiss is traded for the death of the ego, and learning to die while living. It is an unbeatable bargain:

> He is selling a kiss *(būsah)* for your life *(jān)!*
> Go, buy! He is giving them away for free!
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2005:21187, KSD4 p.232; cf. in SPL p.303*

To receive the beloved's kiss also requires detachment of the "spirit" from the material "shell" of "this body". For the divine "moon" (the beloved) to "shine" upon the lover, and grant such a kiss, the outer doors of the body must be closed, and the "window of the heart" to the inner worlds must be opened:

> Come! How much for a kiss *(būsah)* from those precious rubies?
> If a kiss *(būsah)* costs your life, it's your duty to buy it.
> Since that kiss *(būsah)* is pure, it is not suited to dust –
> I will become a detached spirit, I will leave this body.
> The Ocean of Purity said to me:
> "No desire is granted without payment:
> a precious pearl lies within you.
> Come, smash the shell." …
>
> Enter, moon of heaven, for I have opened the window:
> Shine for one night upon my face, press your lips on mine.
> Close the door of speech, and open the window of the heart;
> You will not obtain a kiss *(būsah)* from this moon
> save by way of the window.
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1888:19857–59, 19862–63, KSD4 p.159;*
> *cf. MP2 (233:1–3, 6–7) pp.27–28, in SPL p.303*

To become worthy of such a "kiss", the lover must remain awake "at night" in meditation, awaiting the coming of the beloved. To "count the stars" means to enter the spiritual worlds within:

It is fitting that I should not sleep at night,
for secretly the moon gives a kiss *(būsah)* every night
to him who counts the stars.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 97:1087, KSD1 p.63, in TSR p.346

Rūmī also speculates what would happen were he to receive "six or seven" kisses, rather than just the one. Each of his kisses leaves its "mark". The ego of the lover "cracks", and he conceives an increasing desire to be in contact with the "Water of Life", the divine creative power:

That thieving heart-ravisher gave me a kiss *(būsah)* and went away!
What would have happened, if instead of one,
he had given me six or seven?
Every lip he kisses *(būsīd)* bears its marks:
it splits and cracks from the sweetness of his lips.
Another mark is that mad desire for the lip of the Water of Life
makes love stoke a thousand fires and furnaces every instant.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 419:4414–16, KSD1 p.243; cf. in SPL p.303

Kamāl Khujandī trembles at the thought of the "joy" that would arise from such a kiss from the beloved:

O my soul, I fear you will die of joy
at the moment of such a kiss *(būs);*
Ask not of the lips whose threshold is this!
Kamāl Khujandī, Dīvān, DKK p.83; cf. in SSE2 p.53

But ʿIrāqī indicates that these kisses are a part of the beloved's game of hide and seek, to intensify the love and yearning of the love, and more effectively burn up the sense of individual self. The lover is lucky to receive one such kiss:

I stole a kiss *(būsah)* from your lips,
and my heart desired another.
Separation *(firāq)* from you said,
"Begone, there is no more."
ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 1737, KHI p.158; cf. in SSE2 p.53

Ḥāfiẓ, too, uses the same imagery. The lover may have the power to love, he says, but it is up to the beloved to bestow his divine "kiss":

This is in my power: to give my love to him in secret.
But the bosom *(kinār),* the kiss *(būs),* and the embrace *(āghūsh):*
how can I speak of these since I cannot make them mine?
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.109, DIH p.204; cf. DHWC (185:6) p.353

Like Rūmī, he reckons his "life" – his ego, and dying while living – to be the price of a "kiss". But whether the beloved accepts the price and grants a "kiss" is up to him:

> For a kiss *(būsah)* from his lip, I would surrender my life:
> but that he gives not, and this he takes not.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.53, DIH p.123; cf. DHWC (228:3) p.417*

> Why drive away a broken one like me?
> My only wish is for a kiss *(būsah)* or an embrace *(kināŕ).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.261, DIH p.413; cf. DHWC (542:4), p.888, in SSE2 p.53*

But in another verse, Ḥāfiẓ indicates a successful outcome to his yearning:

> Beholding has been attained,
> as too have the kiss *(būs)* and the embrace *(kināŕ).*
> Thankful am I to my time and my good fortune.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.182, DIH p.308; cf. DHWC (400:1) p.680*

See also: **lab**.

1. Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.428, *e.g.* in *SSE2* p.52.
2. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.91.

but (P), **ṣanam** (A/P) (pl. *aṣnām*) *Lit.* idol; hence, beloved or sweetheart, either worldly or divine.

Idolatry is strictly forbidden in Islam, and the *Qurʾān* has little regard for idols, idolatry, or idolaters. Typical of Sufi poetry, however, things that are anathema to Muslim culture are commonly used in imagery concerning the mystic path. Thus, the "idol" is used as a metaphor for the divine beloved, God or the *murshid,* whom the devotee finds in his heart. Quoting various sources, Tahānawī says that "idol" also represents anything that takes the attention away from God. And since God is in everything, even idol worship is, in a sense, the worship of God, though this may not be a very productive line of reasoning:

> In the *Majmaʿ al-Sulūk* ('Compendium of the Path'), it is stated: "An idol *(ṣanam)* is anything that distracts the devotee from God." This means that whatever distracts one from remembrance of God and the manifestations of divine Names and Attributes is one's idol *(ṣanam);* for whatever you are attached to, you are a devotee thereof.
>
> In the *Kashf al-Lughāt,* it states: "In the wayfarer's terminology an

idol *(ṣanam)* is defined as the manifestation of absolute Being, namely God. So, the idol *(but),* in reality, is God, not a useless or futile thing. An idol worshipper *(but-parast)* is a worshipper of God in the sense that God manifests himself in the form of an idol. 'And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him.'[1] So everybody is ultimately God's worshipper or servant."

In several treatises, it is said that the idol *(ṣanam)* is the manifestation of God's spiritual Reality in the form of divine Attributes. Perfect masters have also been referred to as an idol *(ṣanam).*

Tahānawī, Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT3 pp.71–72; cf. in SSE3 p.221

Tahānawī ends with the more mystical interpretation. ʿIrāqī suggests the same meaning:

In Sufi terminology, idol *(but)* is the goal
and the Sought One *(Maṭlūb).*

ʿIrāqī, Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI p.83; cf. in SSE3 p.218

Saʿdī describes the beauty of his master in a somewhat humorous manner:

If at the corner of every street were seated an idol *(but)* like you,
I do not think that there is a single soul
who would remain true to his religion, except the *qāżī* (judge).

Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 71:11, KSSS p.363; cf. BOS p.81

Rūmī says that the divine beloved is only reached when the beloved draws the lover. "But strive", he counsels nevertheless, for striving helps to burn away the ego that prevents the vision of the beloved:

You will not reach the idol's *(but)* face
until he seizes you with the snare of his tresses –
But strive, for striving will cook you!

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 905:9487, KSD2 p.205, in SPL p.302

ʿIrāqī also makes it plain that the "idol" that is the object of his adoration is not to be found in the "mosque", nor anywhere else outside. That "idol" is the beloved within himself, whom he has found in "the tavern of ruin *(kharābāt)*" – the sanctuary within the body:

Do not now seek ʿIrāqī's station in the mosque,
for he is sitting with the idol *(but)*
in the tavern of ruin *(kharābāt).*

ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 1615, KHI p.152, in SSE3 p.219

Rūmī implores the beloved to unite their two hearts in mystic union:

> Come and make your heart one with mine, O idol *(ṣanam):*
> if I do not surrender, then complain!
> *Rūmī; Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2095:22127, KSD4 p.286; cf. in SSE3 p.220*

Anṣārī says that the beloved is his "idol" and the life of his life:

> I said, "O my idol *(ṣanam),*
> you are my soul of souls *(jān-i jānān):*
> Now that I look carefully, I see you are my soul.
> I will lose my soul, if you should turn from me;
> O soul of the world,
> you are my faith *(īmān)* and infidelity *(kufr).*"
> *Anṣārī, in Kashf al-Asrār, KA1 p.508; cf. in SSE3 pp.220–21*

See also: **but**.

1. *Qur'ān* 17:23.

chángshēn (C), **jōshin** (J) *Lit.* eternal *(cháng)* body *(shēn);* the eternal body of a fully enlightened *buddha;* contrasted with the transient physical body of beings trapped in the cycle of rebirth. The Sanskrit term for this Reality body of a *buddha* is *dharmakāya* (C. *fǎshēn,* J. *hōshin*).

See also: **dharmakāya**.

chashm (P) *Lit.* eye, vision, sight; also, charm, amulet; mystically, inner vision, mystical vision. *Chashm* refers both to the all-seeing eye of God on His creation, as well as the inner vision of the mystic. In Sufi thinking, the two ultimately become one, as in a *ḥadīth* in which God speaks of the mystic lover:

> When I (God) love him,
> I am his hearing with which he hears,
> his seeing *(baṣar)* with which he sees,
> his hand with which he strikes,
> and his foot with which he walks.
> *Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ (al-Bukhārī) 8:76.509; AMBF 42*

Chashm is used somewhat less than its Arabic counterpart *ʿayn* to mean the mystic vision of the devotee. It functions primarily as a symbol of the divine Beauty upon which the devotee contemplates, becoming intoxicated with love and bliss. Depending upon the context, it also refers to a devotee's encounter with the *shaykh* or master, both in this world and on the inner planes. A glance from the all-seeing eye of the *shaykh* can fill a devotee with love and divine longing, causing complete detachment, not only from the material world, but also from the far more alluring enchantments of the heavenly regions. ʿAṭṭār says that since his spiritual "heart" was inspired to divine "fervour" by the stirring of the beloved's glance, he has been a lover of his "eye *(chashm)*":

> Since my heart was stirred to fervour
> by the agitation of your eye,
> I am a lover of your eye *(chashm),*
> enamoured of your fervour.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 425:6499, DASN p.345; cf. in SSE1 p.28*

Maghribī agrees that the devotee is an intoxicated captive of the beloved's beauty:

> We toss and turn in our sweetheart's tresses,
> drunk and devastated by the beloved's eye *(chashm).*
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 140:1351, DSMR p.173, in SSE1 p.27*

For the beloved's glance holds the "promise" of release from the "discords of time":

> With one languishing look,
> your eyes *(chashm)* promise release from the discords of time
> for a thousand weary souls like me.
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 141:1370, DSMR p.174; cf. in SSE1 p.27*

Yet, says ʿAṭṭār, the experience of such things are to be kept secret:

> Your eye *(chashm)* shed the blood of my heart.
> Then you said, "Keep it a secret."
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 373:5868, DASN p.315; in SSE1 p.27*

The divine beauty of the beloved involves the death of the individual self. As such, says ʿAṭṭār, the beloved's eyes are "murderers". But this is no cause for concern, for he is also the source of the Water of Life, the divine creative power that brings salvation:

Even if the beloved's two eyes *(chashm)* are murderers,
there is nothing to fear:
For his two ruby lips offer the Water of Life *(Āb-i Ḥayvān).*
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 222:5237, DASN p.282; cf. in SSE1 p.29

Your ruby lips come forth to enliven the soul:
your eyes *(chashm)* are present to ravish the heart.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 260:4482, DASN p.243; in SSE1 p.28

Chashm is related to the word *chashmah,* which means fountain, spring, essence or source, as in *Chashmah-'i Āb-i Ḥayāt* (Spring of the Water of Life), *Chashmah-'i Kawśar* (Fountain of Abundance), *Chashmah-'i Khiżr* (Spring of Khiżr) and *Chashmah-'i Zindagānī* (Fountain of Life), all of which refer to the divine power in creation. Sufi writers are fond of a wordplay between the two. Thus, speaking with an abundance of metaphors, Rūmī writes of the inner encounter with the beloved:

How sweet it is to give speech and head,
to converse with his lip;
Especially when he opens the door and says,
"Good sir, come in!"
To the parched lip, he tells the story
of the Fountain of Khiżr *(Chashmah-'i Khiżr);*
According to the stature of the man,
the tailor of his love cuts the gown.
The fountains *(chashmʿhā)* become drunken
through the intoxication of his eye *(chashm);*
The trees are dancing before the gentle breeze of dawn.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 45:569–71 KSD1 p.35; cf. MP1 (6:1–3) p.11

Many compound expressions using *chashm* are used, conveying mundane, poetic, and spiritual meanings. A number of such expressions appear in Sufi texts. These are said by some Sufi systematizers – especially ʿIrāqī, whose *Iṣṭilāḥāt* appears to have been consulted by the unknown author of *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq* – to signify various particular aspects of the beloved's eyes or glance. As with *chashm* on its own, 'eyes' can refer metaphorically to the all-seeing, unseen 'eyes' of the Divine, or – more commonly – to the deep, perceptive human eyes of the *shaykh,* whose glance can convey spiritual illumination, or to the spiritually intoxicating eye or glance of the master within.

Reviewing the various instances of use, it seems uncertain whether the Sufi poets always used these terms with the meanings given them by their later commentators, for the contexts are usually of a general nature, and the qualifying adjectives employed are simply those of poetic imagery. It is

possible, therefore, that the systematizers, in search of specific meanings, worked backwards from instances of use found in such poets as ʿAṭṭār, Ḥāfiẓ and Maghribī, assigning particular 'meanings' that had never been intended. One systematizer then carried across the information from another.

The common import of all these expressions is the communication of direct spiritual illumination or insight. Much is concealed and much revealed in a master's eyes. In one way or another, the recipient is spiritually benefited by the look of his master. This becomes clear from the contexts in which these expressions are used.

1. *Chashm-i āhūvānah. Lit.* the deer-like *(āhūvānah),* gazelle-like or doe-like eye; doe-eyes. The dark, liquid and aware eyes of the deer are likened to the eyes of the *shaykh* or to the unseen gaze of God. Without anything being said, they make a wayfarer conscious of his failings, and act as a restraint upon his mind and conduct:[1]

> The image impressed upon the mind
> of your doe-eyes *(chashm-i āhūvānah)*
> is sufficient even for the most lion-like of men
> as a lesson in the art of the hunt.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 382:5992, DASN p.320; cf. in SSE1 p.32*

Spiritual "resurrection" – the spirit's escape from the body – can be accomplished in just a moment when the master bestows a look of grace:

> Resurrection *(rastakhīz)* happens in the "twinkling of an eye",[2]
> swift as a dart, shot from your doe-eyes *(chashm-i āhūvānah).*
> *ʿAṭṭār, Unsourced, in FNI1 p.31; cf. in SSE1 p.32*

2. *Chashm-i bīmār. Lit.* ailing, sick, or languishing eye; an eye 'feverish' and aglow with love's intensity that can cause the death of the ego, and draw the soul from the body; an eye or look of the beloved that is said to conceal the wayfarer's failings, even from himself;[3] also described as the occasional veiling of mystical states in the more advanced wayfarer, due to the weight of materiality.[4]

Ḥāfiẓ describes how this look can see through the wayfarer's façade of faith to the failings within, enabling the wayfarer to be rid of their painful presence:

> With your dark eyelashes,
> you have made a thousand breaches in my faith:
> Come, through your ailing eye *(chashm-i bīmār),*
> let me pluck a thousand pains (from my heart).
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.169, DIH p.293; cf. DHWC (372:1) p.642*

Using the term more generally, he says that the "ailing eye" of the master can, with a single "glance", take the soul out of the body:

> Strike not at my heart with your arrow-like glance,
> lest before your ailing eye *(chashm-i bīmār),* I die.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.202, DIH p.329; cf. DHWC (429:1) p.717*

3. *Chashm-i fitnah jū'ī. Lit.* seditious, mischief-making, rabble-rousing, or trouble-making eye; a look that causes a disturbance. Maghribī describes how the eyes of the beloved cause a riot of love in a "thousand" lovers:

> From your one heart-beguiling *(dilfarīb)*
> and seditious eye *(chashm-i fitnah jū'ī)*
> sprang the creation of a thousand riotous eyes.
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 84:803, DSMR p.136, in SSE1 p.36*

4. *Chashm-i jādū, chashm-i fattān. Lit.* bewitching, beguiling alluring, captivating, spellbinding, or enchanting eye; eye of sorcery; an eye or look of the beloved that is said to imply the withholding of spiritual truths from the wayfarer so that he may come to rely more on his own effort.[5] More generally, Sufi poets seem to use the expression to convey the captivating nature of the beloved's eyes. For Maghribī, having seen the beloved's eyes, the image of them stays in his mind's eye:

> What spell have her bewitching eyes *(chashm-i jādū)*
> cast upon my eyes *(chashm)?*
> For now nothing comes before my eyes *(chashm),*
> but her bewitching eyes *(chashm-i jādū).*
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 115:1117, DSMR p.159; cf. in SSE1 p.37*

Ḥāfiẓ is "intoxicated" and "demolished" by the beloved's eyes:

> The fragrant breeze from your tresses' curl *(ja'd)*
> keeps me continually intoxicated.
> Moment by moment, I am demolished
> by the beguiling of your bewitching eye *(chashm-i jādū).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.41, DIH p.101; cf. DHWC (86:1) p.194*

His heart has been thrown into the turmoil of love:

> Since I beheld your two eyes of sorcery *(chashm-i jādū),*
> my heart has known neither rest nor patience.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DIH p.230; cf. DHWC (297:3) p.518*

5. *Chashm-i khumārī, chashm-i makhmūr. Lit.* stupored or languorous eye; drunken eye; *khumārī* means a drunken headache, a state of intoxication, or half-drunkenness; *makhmūr* means languorous, half-drunk, intoxicated; an eye or look of the beloved that is said by ʿIrāqī to conceal the wayfarer's failings from himself, though not necessarily from the all-seeing master;[6] seemingly used by Sufi poets in a more general manner for the restful eyes of the master, full of the silent and captivating depth of divine intoxication. In ancient Persian culture, languorous eyes are regarded as being of great beauty. Sanāʾī says that gazing into the beloved's eyes have filled him with such a lover's yearning, that he is, so to speak, bleeding within:

> From that wine-heavy languorous eye *(chashm-i khumārī),*
> both my eyes brim over with blood.
>
> *Sanāʾī, Dīvān 43, AMM p.814; in SSE1 p.31*

ʿAṭṭār likewise admits that his joy-intoxicated "heart" has been "ravished" by these eyes:

> You, the heart enchantress with wine-stupored *(makhmūr)*
> and languishing eyes *(chashm-i dilrubāy),*
> have ravished my drunken heart.
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 644:8847, DASN p.464; in SSE1 p.31*

6. *Chashm-i mast, chashm-i sarmast. Lit.* drunken, enraptured, or intoxicated eye; said by some to imply the beloved's eye or look of divine love that conceals the failings of the wayfarer both from himself and others, permitting him to grow out of them almost unawares.[7] Maghribī says that the beloved's "drunken eye" protects the "heart's honour":

> The lore of his drunken eyes *(chashm-i mast)*
> sets my heart whirling, ecstatically afire, enthused.
> See how drunkards' legends spread so contagiously!
> Look how his heartwarming eye *(chashm-i dil navāz)* respects the heart,
> and in its drunken revelling oversees the heart's honour!
> Everyone finds a patron for self-protection's sake;
> Maghribī has found a patron in his drunken eye *(chashm-i sarmast).*
>
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 83:792, 796, 799, DSMR pp.135–36; cf. in SSE1 p.30*

ʿAṭṭār admits that the master's "drunken eye" has drawn his soul out of his body:

> What's to be done with this body?
> Now that your drunken eye *(chashm-i mast)*

has abducted, from the body,
the soul which I hardly owned.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 183:3628, DASN p.197; cf. in SSE1 p.30

With a single glance, all the vows and efforts made by a struggling seeker are swept away into those "drunken eyes":

Her drunken eyes *(chashm-i mast)* revoke,
by a single languishing glance,
a hundred penitential vows made by my hapless heart.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 391:6094, DASN p.325; cf. in SSE1 p.30

7. *Chashm-i nargis. Lit.* narcissus eye; said by some Sufi commentators to be the eye or look of the beloved that signifies the concealment of mystical states and the qualities of perfection either from the mystic himself or – more usually – from others.[8] In Persian poetry, the narcissus represents coquettish qualities. As before, in Sufi poetry the meaning of *chashm-i nargis* often seems more general. Referring to the master as the "idol", ʿAṭṭār says that the master's eyes fill everyone with joy:

The whole horizon was filled with commotion and delight,
when you, O idol, opened your narcissus eyes *(chashm-i nargis).*
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 296:4910, DASN p.266; cf. in SSE1 p.35

Ḥāfiẓ uses a similar expression for the intoxicating attraction of the inner beloved:

The intoxicated narcissus *(nargis-i mast),*
granter of grace, preserver of man –
If it drink a goblet of lover's blood,
sweet to it may it be!
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.96, DIH p.182; cf. DHWC (237:8) p.430

8. *Chashm-i nīm khvāb. Lit.* half *(nīm)* asleep *(khvāb)* or drowsy eye; an eye or look of the beloved that conceals the wayfarer's failings from himself, though not necessarily from his all-seeing master; has the same symbolic meaning as *chashm-i khumārī* (languorous eye). ʿAṭṭār complains that the intensity of his love for the beloved keeps him awake at night in contemplation:

Your drowsy eye *(chashm-i nīm khvāb)* has made me sleepless:
What peace, then, do you propose to give me?
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 68:2388, DASN p.135; cf. in SSE1 p.40

9. *Chashm-i purkhvāb. Lit.* sleepy, drowsy, or languorous eye; an eye or look of the beloved that conceals the failings of the wayfarer both from himself and others, permitting him to grow out of them almost unawares; has the same symbolic meaning as *chashm-i mast* (drunken eyes). ʿAṭṭār says that the hearts of even those who have not drunk at the spring of contemplation have been touched by the beloved's glance:

> Even with the wine undrunk, standing to one side,
> what heart has not been undone
> by the art of your sleepy eye *(chashm-i purkhvāb)?*
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 120:2983, DASN p.164; cf. in SSE1 p.41*

10. *Chashm-i shahlā. Lit.* indigo *(shahlā)* eye; *shahlā* is also the name of a species of narcissus, hence also narcissus eye; according to some Sufis, this eye or look of the beloved discloses something of the mystical condition and inner perfection of the master to his disciples, so that they may find the path to God.[9] Using the term generally, Ḥāfiẓ petitions his master for the glance that draws the soul out of the body:

> You, in separation from whom
> a lifetime of affliction has been passed –
> Spare me just one glance:
> let me be slain by your indigo eye *(chashm-i shahlā).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.43, DIH p.103; cf. DHWC (95:4) p.211*

11. *Chashm-i shang. Lit.* saucy, impudent, merry, gay, or cheerful eye; said to be the eye or knowing look of the beloved that reveals the spiritual state of the wayfarer to himself;[10] a look or glance that makes the wayfarer realize what is really going on in his mind; has the same meaning as *chashm-i shūkh* (impudent eye). ʿAṭṭār describes how such a look from the master brings with it the anguish of love:

> Your saucy eyes *(chashm-i shang)* drink my blood.
> How long will you flaunt me with such sauciness?
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 343:5467, DASN p.293; in SSE1 p.40*

12. *Chashm-i shūkh. Lit.* impudent or bold eye; said to be the eye or knowing look of the beloved that gives the wayfarer insight into his spiritual condition, especially a look that leads the lover to the idolatry of love.[11] Here, idolatry is meant in the sense that, after such a look, the lover has no time for the external aspects of religion; his only religion becomes that of love. All other beliefs and concepts are swept away. Ḥāfiẓ says that the individual self has

little hope of surviving the beloved's glance, shot like an arrow from the curve ("bow") of his eyebrow:

> What hope lies of protecting life
> from your bold eye *(chashm-i shūkh),*
> waiting constantly in ambush with your bow?
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.24, DIH p.70; cf. DHWC (105:8) p.224*

13. *Chashm-i siyāh. Lit.* black or dark eye; said to symbolize the eye or glance of the beloved that gives a wayfarer insight either into his inner mystical state or into his failings.[12] Ḥāfiẓ says that the balance between inner intoxication and outer sobriety can only be learnt from the master's "dark eye":

> Unless your dark eye *(chashm-i siyāh)* should teach us how,
> none can learn the art of intoxication and sobriety.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (168:7) p.178, DIH p.148; cf. DHWC (221:5) p.404*

To receive a look from those eyes requires that the sense of individual self be relinquished:

> O my soul, sacrifice yourself
> for a glance from that dark eye *(chashm-i siyāh).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.220, DIH p.354; cf. DHWC (469:2) p.777*

For while his lips express sweetness, his "black eye" seeks the death of the self:

> From his sugar-lips wafts the perfume of milk,
> from the glance of his black eye *(chashm-i siyāh)* trickles blood.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.152, DIH p.262; cf. DHWC (331:5) p.572*

ʿAṭṭār adds that the glance of the master can wipe away sins:

> Your black eye *(chashm-i siyāh)* is the cleanser.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 720:9594, DASN p.505*

14. *Chashm-i maygūn. Lit.* wine-like eye; has the same symbolic meaning as *chashm-i mast* (intoxicated eye):

> All the sweetness of the world is in that black-faced one:
> the wine-coloured eye *(chashm-i maygūn),* the laughing lips,
> the joyous heart are all his.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.10, DIH p.46; cf. DHWC (24:1) p.78*

See also: ʿ**ayn al-qalb** (▸3), **chashm** (▸3).

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.60, *RLRI* p.80; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.189; Tabrīzī, *Rashf al-Alḥāẓ, RKA* p.58; all in *SSE1* pp.31–32.
2. *Qur'ān* 54:50, *AYA*.
3. Javād Nūrbakhsh, *Sufi Symbolism, SSE1* p.38.
4. *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.189.
5. Javād Nūrbakhsh, *Sufi Symbolism, SSE1* p.37.
6. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.59, *RLRI* p.80; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.190; all in *SSE1* pp.30–31.
7. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.59, *RLRI* p.80; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.190; both in *SSE1* pp.29–30.
8. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.87; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.191; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.435; all in *SSE1* pp.34–35.
9. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.66, *RLRI* p.87; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.190; all in *SSE1* pp.32–33.
10. See *Sufi Symbolism, SSE1* p.40.
11. Anon., in *SSE1* p.35.
12. *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.190; Javād Nūrbakhsh, *Sufi Symbolism, SSE1* p.39.

chihrah (P) *Lit.* face, countenance; in Sufi poetry, the manifestation of the divine Beauty to the seeker;[1] the inner vision of the divine beloved; the vision of the radiant spiritual form of the *shaykh* or master.

The effect of seeing the radiant form of the inner beloved is such that anyone who sees it is immediately captivated:

> You only need to lower the veil from your countenance *(chihrah),*
> and you will cause everyone to submit their souls, unhesitatingly.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 633:8744, DASN p.458; cf. in SSE1 p.41*

No one, regardless of their religion, can withstand the impact of the beauty and reality of suh a vision. Once that face is seen, the soul becomes absorbed in the longing to see it again. Its luminosity surpasses that of the sun and moon:

> Were a single mote of your face *(rukh)* to show itself,
> neither dervish cloak nor Christian girdle
> would remain upon the earth.
> When you show your face *(rūy)* to anyone in the two worlds,
> he is consumed by fire and left with no business but your heartache.
> Should you throw off the veil from that beautiful face *(chihrah),*
> no trace would remain of the faces of the sun and moon.
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 657:6851–53, KSD2 p.70; cf. in SPL pp.299–300*

The experience of his beauty is itself the answer to all who doubt its existence:

Against all imitators –
all those unoriginal poseurs who deny love –
I present irrefutable evidence:
The splendid loveliness of your countenance *(chihrah).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.26, DIH p.69, in SSE1 pp.41–42; cf. DHWC (97:2) p.213

The veil that hinders the soul's vision of this loveliness is the body and its sensory attractions:

The dust of my body
is a veil across the beloved's face *(chihrah):*
Happy the moment
when I can pull the veil from his face *(chihrah).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.173, DIH p.298; cf. DHWC (385:1) p.661

But when the lover, absorbed in the bliss of divine love, beholds the inner face of the beloved, the soul leaves the body:

Now listen, for that lover has come,
whom love has bound fast with a cord of palm fibre.
When he beheld the countenance *(chihrah)* of the *ṣadr-i jahān,*
you might say that the bird, his spirit, flew out of his body.
His body fell like dry wood: his vital spirit became cold
from the crown of his head to his toes.
Whatever they applied, such as incense and rose-water,
he neither stirred nor spoke.
When the king saw his pallid face *(rū),*
he dismounted from his steed and came towards him.
He said, "The lover hotly seeks the beloved:
but when the beloved comes, the lover is gone."
Rūmī, Maśnavī III:4615–20; cf. MJR4 p.258

The *"ṣadr-i jahān"* is the highest ranking legal and religious officer, here symbolizing the master, as does the "king". Rūmī is saying that when the lover saw the outer form of his master, the soul left the body. The lover longs for the outer vision of his master, but on seeing it, he ascends to the vision of the inner master.

See also: **dīdār**, **liqāʾ**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭalʿah**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.67, *RLRI* p.88, in *SSE1* p.41; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.191, in *SSE1* p.41; Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.140, in *SSE1* p.41.

Comforter See **paraclete**.

companion See **twin**.

couch See **bed**.

countenance See **face**.

counterpart See **twin**.

dahān, **dahan** (P) *Lit.* mouth; in Sufi poetry, the mouth of the divine beloved, signifying either God or the perfect master; said to represent the externalization of the divine Attribute of articulation and speech;[1] hence, the source of God's Command *(Amr),* Word *(Kalimah),* or the divine fiat "Be *(Kun)!*", all of which refer to the divine creative power; also, the source of the Water of Life; sometimes used of the *shaykh* or master in a more general sense, referring either explicitly to what he says or more metaphorically to his beauty and kindness. A small mouth is regarded as a feature of great beauty in ancient Persian culture, and *dahān* sometimes appears as *dahān-i shīrīn* (sugary or sweet mouth), *dahān-i kūchak* (small mouth) or *dahān-i tang* (pursed mouth), which are said to imply the conveying of private and subtle truths and mysteries.[2] Also, a small mouth is commonly compared to a rosebud *(ghunchah dahan),*[3] unopened and concealing a hidden beauty, and sometimes to a small nut, such as the pistachio.[4]

The mouth of the *murshid* or master is often said to contain the Water of Life, because a perfect master is a personification of this divine power, which brings about the annihilation of the lover's ego. Khiżr is a mythological prophet of the Middle East, believed to have attained immortality through finding and drinking the Water of Life:

> When Khiżr beheld your life-giving, heart-entrancing lips, he said,
> "The Water of the Fountain of Life flows from your mouth *(dahān).*"
>
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 102:2, KSSS p.265; cf. TOS p.141*

You whose mouth *(dahān)* contains the Water of Life,
an arrow aimed at my certain destruction is in your bow!
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 16:1, KSSS p.349; cf. BOS p.19

Although the Water of Life is in his mouth *(dahān)* and lips,
it would come as no surprise
if that mouth *(dahan)* and those lips were to prove the death of me.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 88:3, KSSS p.367; cf. BOS p.98

Your lip is like Khiżr and your mouth *(dahān),* the Water of Life:
Your stature, the cypress; your waist, a hair;
and your bosom, like shining ivory.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.45, DIH p.108; cf. DHWC (111:8) p.233

Ḥāfiẓ maintains that Muḥammad was the prophet or wise man of the age:

Although those sweet *(shīrīn)* of mouth *(dahan)* are kings,
yet he (Muḥammad) is the Solomon of the age:
For the seal (of prophecy) is with him.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.10, DIH p.46; cf. DHWC (24:2) p.78

From the beloved's mouth flows forth the wisdom of the Unseen – either as spoken words from his bodily form or as inspirations and soul-expanding understanding from his spiritual, inner form:

O breeze, from the mouth of the friend *(dahan-i dūst),*
convey some soul-expanding subtlety:
From the world of mysteries, bring a letter of good news.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.126, DIH p.224; cf. DHWC (286:2) p.502

Since the master is the source of wisdom, love and joy, "Why then," asks Jāmī, like many others before and since, "do you hide yourself?" To which the beloved replies that he is never truly hidden. He can always be seen by the spiritual eye:

"O fairest rose, with rosebud mouth *(ghunchah dahan),*" I sighed,
"Why, like coquettes, your face forever hide?"
He smiled, "Unlike the beauties of the earth,
even when veiled I still may be descried."
Jāmī, Lavāʾiḥ XVI, LTSP p.21; cf. LTS p.15

See also: **dahān** (3.1).

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.88; *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.197; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.440.
2. *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.197.
3. *E.g.* Ḥāfiẓ, *Dīvān, DHA* pp.43, 24, 265, *DIH* pp.98, 71, 418, *DHWC* (27:6, 63:5, 561:3) pp.81, 155, 912; Jāmī, *Lavāʾiḥ* XVI, *LTSP* p.21, *LTS* p.15; Saʿdī, *Badāyiʿ* 57:9, *KSSS* p.359, *BOS* p.65; Saʿdī, *Ṭayyibāt* 406:5, *KSSS* p.341, *TOS* p.541.
4. *E.g.* Ḥāfiẓ, *Dīvān, DHA* pp.96, 52, 160, *DIH* pp.182, 116, 275, *DHWC* (237:7, 248:1, 353:5) pp.429, 447, 607; Saʿdī, *Ṭayyibāt* 179:4, 321:3, 382:6, *KSSS* pp.283, 318, 333, *TOS* pp.244, 433, 509.

dānah (P) *Lit.* grain, seed, berry, the stone in a fruit; grain or bait scattered for catching birds; mole, beauty spot; in Sufi metaphor, the focus of attraction and charm of the face of the divine beloved, the face referring particularly to the inner or spiritual form of the beloved. Since *dānah* means both mole and the grain scattered by fowlers to lure birds into their traps or nets, Persian poets have played on this double meaning. Saʿdī says that the mole of the beloved is a lure that does not let him escape:

> My only wish was to have a look
> at that speck of a mole *(dānah);*
> But, when I beheld it,
> I had no way of escape from the snare *(dām).*
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 64:3, KSSS p.257, TOS p.92*

> It is not only I that am prey
> to the lure of your mole *(dānah):*
> Whoever sees it, has been caught in your net.

> I thought I would take but one glance at her
> with the corner of my eye;
> But my gaze remained fixed on her,
> and its stay there was prolonged.
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 185:4–5, OSSS p.221; cf. TOS p.252*

And:

> If the curl of your ringlets *(kham-i gīsū)* is a snare
> for the mystics (*ṣāḥib-naẓar,* men of vision),
> then surely that mole and earlobe of yours
> are the grain *(dānah)* and the trap?
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 47:4, KSSS p.253; cf. TOS pp.66–67*

The word more commonly used for mole is *khāl.*

See also: **khāl**.

dandān (P) (pl. *dandān ʾhā*) *Lit.* tooth; said in the Sufi glossary *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq* to imply the divine Attribute of apprehension or perception *(idrāk),*[1] perhaps because teeth can take hold of something, being sharp and penetrating. In Persian imagery, beautiful teeth are often described as pearls;[2] Among the Persian mystic poets, the term is often used in a general manner in descriptions of the beloved's beauty.

Verses of mystical love by Saʿdī and Sanāʾī contain simple descriptions of the master's beauty that simultaneously convey a double meaning. It is sweet words and wisdom that issue from a master's human mouth, but the sweetness of the divine Word that comes from his spiritual form:

> God bless your soul!
> How sweet are your lips *(lab)* and teeth *(dandān)!*
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 14:1, KSSS p.348, BOS p.16*

And:

> Your lip *(lab)* is as ruby,
> your tooth *(dandān)* like a gem and pearl *(laʿl-u guhar);*
> The peace and solace of the soul
> is your lip *(lab)* and tooth *(dandān).*
> *Sanāʾī, Dīvān 32, AMM p.809; cf. in SSE1 p.57*

See also: **lab**, **lab** (3.1).

1. *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.197.
2. Saʿdī, *Badāyiʿ* 84:1, 137:3, *KSSS* pp.366, 379, *BOS* pp.93, 151; *Ṭayyibāt* 124:7, 171:7, 248:9, 284:6, 333:3, *KSSS* pp.282, 301, 309, 380 (in *Badāyiʿ*), *TOS* pp.171, 233, 339, 386, 446.

dharmakāya (S), **dhammakāya** (Pa), **fǎshēn** (C), **hōshin** (J) *Lit.* Truth *(Dharma)* body *(kāya);* Law *(fǎ, hō)* body *(shēn, shin);* Reality body. According to the *Mahāyāna trikāya* (having three bodies) doctrine, the *dharmakāya* is the essential reality or inner being of a *buddha* – his cosmic, transcendental *dharma* body (Truth body), which is identical with absolute Reality or eternal Perfection. It is formless, unborn, unchanging, synonymous with suchness

or emptiness *(shūnyatā),* beyond all conceptualizing, and hence incomprehensible to the human intellect.

The *dharmakāya* is free of all impurities. It is the one Reality out of which all *buddhas* emerge and, having fulfilled their purpose, return. In fact, it is not a 'body' in any sense at all, in the way the term is generally understood. The *dharmakāya* is eternity, radiance, harmony, purity, enjoyment, and the essence of enlightenment – without beginning or end, beyond duality. Everything in existence is a manifestation of the *dharmakāya* that permeates all. The *Dharma* also refers to the Buddha's teachings and, at a more mundane level, after the death of the Buddha, to the body of teachings that he left behind were also known as the *dharmakāya.*

Although the *trikāya* is essentially a *Mahāyāna* doctrine, its essential elements are drawn from the early Pali literature. The term *dhammakāya* (body of Truth, embodiment of Truth) was current even during the Buddha's lifetime. The Buddha tells the *brāhmaṇ* Vāseṭṭha that the *tathāgata* is known as the body of *Dhamma (dhammakāya),* the manifestation of *Dhamma (dhammabhūta),* the body of *Brahma (brahmakāya),* and the manifestation of *Brahma (brahmabhūta).*[1]

He is implying that the *Dhamma* is equivalent to the *Brahman* or *Brahma* of the *Upanishads.* In the *Vakkali Sutta,* Vakkali admits his unworthiness to the Buddha (at length), and the Buddha finally comforts him, saying, "Enough, Vakkali. What is there to see in this vile body? Whoever sees the *Dhamma* sees me; whoever sees me sees the *Dhamma.*" Vakkali then goes on to acknowledge that the human form of the Buddha is "impermanent".[2]

Later interpreters, especially those well versed in meditation, have understood the *dharmakāya* to be the essential Reality known to all *buddhas,* and the true reality of all sentient beings. The twelfth-century Tibetan *lama* Gampopa quotes a verse:

> Like water flowing into water or oil mixed with oil,
> transcendent awareness has merged indivisibly
> with that which is ineffable.
> This is the *dharmakāya,* which is the nature of all *buddhas.*
>
> *Gampopa, Jewel Ornament of Liberation 20:118b;*
> *cf. JOLG pp.258–59, JOLK p.283*

The Tibetan *Uttaratantra Shāstra,* of uncertain though ancient origins, is one of many texts that maintain that all beings are already *buddhas* with the potential to realize their inherent buddhahood or *buddha*-nature. It describes the *dharmakāya* as the state beyond duality, where it is realized that all things are one. It is beyond time, beyond all notions of self or non-self, free from all aspects of the mind:

> It (the *dharmakāya*) is purity, since its nature is pure and all remaining impressions have been removed. It is true self, since all conceptual elaboration in terms of self and non-self is totally stilled. It is true happiness, since the aggregates of mental nature and their causes are overcome. It is permanence, since the cycle of existence and the state beyond suffering are realized as one. . . .
>
> It (the *dharmakāya*) does not change into something else, since it has inexhaustible properties. It is the refuge of beings, without any limitations of time, until the final end. It is always free from duality, since all thought is foreign to it. It is also an indestructible state, since its nature is uncreated. . . .
>
> Since it is endowed with inexhaustible qualities, (the *dharmakāya*) is unchangingness itself and thus has the attribute of permanence.
>
> *Uttaratantra Shāstra 1; cf. BNUS pp.24, 29–30*

The ninth-century Chinese *Chán* Buddhist Huángbò Xīyùn, the master of Línjì Yìxuán (J. Rinzai), speaks of the ultimate Reality as the Void or Emptiness *(Shūnyatā),* which he equates with the *dharmakāya:*

> To say that the real *dharmakāya (fǎshēn)* of the *buddha* resembles the Void is another way of saying that the *dharmakāya* is the Void and that the Void is the *dharmakāya.* People often claim that the *dharmakāya* is *in* the Void and that the Void *contains* the *dharmakāya,* not realizing that they are one and the same. But if you define the Void as something existing, then it is not the *dharmakāya;* and if you define the *dharmakāya* as something existing, then it is not the Void. Only refrain from any objective conception of the Void; then it is the *dharmakāya;* and, if only you refrain from any objective conception of the *dharmakāya,* why, then it is Void. These two do not differ from each other, nor is there any difference between sentient beings and *buddhas,* or between *saṃsāra* (*shēngsǐ,* reincarnation) and *nirvāṇa (nièpán),* or between delusion *(fánnǎo,* S. *klesha)* and *bodhi* (*pútí,* enlightenment). When all such forms are abandoned, there is the *buddha (fó).*
>
> *Huángbò Xīyùn, Chuánxīn Fǎyào, T48 2012A:381a12–19, ZTHP pp.67–68*

See also: **trikāya**.

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* 27, *Aggañña Sutta, PTSD3* p.84.
2. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 22:87, *Vakkali Sutta, PTSS3* pp.120–21; *cf. CDBB* p.939.

dīdār (P) *Lit.* sight, vision, glance; eye; countenance, face, appearance; manifest, exposed to view; in Sufism, the radiant face or countenance of the divine

beloved within; the manifested radiance of the divine Beauty; the radiant form of the divine beloved; the inner spiritual form of the *shaykh, murshid,* or master.

For the lover, being with the beloved becomes the focus of existence:

> The company of the precious beloved is the sole object
> of our term of existence:
> Both the worlds are the price
> for a momentary glimpse of her face *(dīdār).*
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 40:6, KSSS p.354; cf. BOS p.44*

But because of the lover's impurity, the beloved does not reveal himself all at once, nor is the experience continuous. It is a game of hide and seek:

> You show your countenance *(dīdār)* and then you hide it,
> enhancing your value and increasing our desire.
> Sometimes I behold the one I love without interruption,
> and then a mist falls upon me, and I lose the way;
> It kindles fire, then quenches it with a sprinkling shower:
> that is why you see me burning and drowning.
> *Saʿdī, Gulistān, Story 2:9, KSSS p.23; cf. GRG p.120*

See also: **chihrah**, **liqāʾ**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭalʿah**.

dilbar (P) *Lit.* heart-ravisher; one who takes the heart away, one who steals the heart; beloved, sweetheart; in Sufism, the divine beloved, referring to either God or, more commonly, the *shaykh,* the master – inner or outer – who becomes the entire focus of the soul's love; used synonymously with *maʿshūq* (beloved). In Persian, the gender of pronouns is ambiguous, and can be either masculine or feminine, something which is impossible to translate into English without recourse to artificial construction.

Ḥāfiẓ writes of the beauty of the divine beloved, the master:

> I have wandered the wide world,
> and at the end of my labours,
> I have chosen a heart-ravisher *(dilbar)* so peerless
> that he is beyond description.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.141, DIH p.247; cf. DHWC (313:2) p.543*

> The heart-attracting flowers all display their jewels:
> but our heart-ravisher *(dilbar)* comes with God-given beauty.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.71, DIH p.160; cf. DHWC (230:7) p.419*

That lovely one, full of grace and purity,
is the envy of the Water of Life;
In beauty and goodness, that heart-ravisher *(dilbar),*
is the envy of the full moon.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.189, DIH p.316; cf. DHWC (412:3) p.697

Ḥāfiẓ also speaks of the pain of separation from the inner beloved (his "face"):

In separation *(dūrī)* from the heart-ravisher *(dilbar),*
my body melted –
My soul consumed in the fire of love for the beloved's face.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.35, DIH p.84; cf. DHWC (65:2) p.159

When I have no vision of you, hardly a breath of life is left in me.
O heart-ravisher *(dilbar),* show me your face
that I may extinguish my life like a candle in the morning.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.155, DIH p.270; cf. DHWC (347:10) p.595

Despite the yearning of the lover, the beloved knows the right moment to reveal himself within:

Although he knew the expectation in my heart,
the heart-ravisher *(dilbar)* did not consider
the moment right for union.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.38, DIH p.91; cf. DHWC (66:8) p.163

It is the little self, say both Maghribī and Saʿdī, that stands in the way of this union:

Take me out of myself, O heart-ravisher *(dilbar),*
for there is no other veil before me but myself.
Maghribī, Dīvān 114:1105, DSMR p.158; cf. in SSE2 p.41

O Saʿdī, give up your life,
for two friends *(dūst)* cannot be contained in one heart.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 65:9, KSSS p.257; cf. TOS p.94

See also: **maʿshūq** (7.1).

divine form, **inner form**, **light form** The inner or spiritual form of the master which is encountered on the threshold of the astral realm, and which accompanies the soul thereafter on the ascent to God. Mystics of the divine Word have taught

that the real master *is* the Word, and that at whatever level a soul reaches, the Word assumes a form at that level that is recognized by the soul as its master.

This essentially indescribable form has been portrayed in a number of ways in the various traditions. In the Christian gospels, the references to the Comforter and 'coming again' are probably allusions to this form, especially those in John's gospel:[1]

> Let not your hearts be troubled:
> you believe in God, so believe in me also.
> In my Father's house are many mansions:
> if it were not so, I would have told you.
> I go to prepare a place for you.
> And if I go and prepare a place for you,
> I will come again, and receive you unto myself;
> That where I am, there you may be also.
>
> *John 14:1–3; cf. KJV*

There are also the stories of Jesus' transfiguration on the "mount".[2] These again are probably literalizations of the vision of the radiant, spiritual form on the inner 'mountains' (regions). The incident is mentioned in the *Acts of Thomas,* where Judas Thomas underlines the fact that this form cannot be seen either by physical vision or without the help of the master. He speaks of Jesus,

> whose divine form on the mount
> we were not able to see by ourselves alone.
>
> *Acts of Thomas VIII, AAA p.278*

In the Nag Hammadi tractate, the *Gospel of Mary,* echoing Jesus' words in Luke's gospel and the gnostic *Gospel of Thomas,*[3] it is made very clear that this form is to be found within. Jesus says:

> Beware that no one lead you astray, saying,
> "Lo here!" or "Lo there!"
> For the Son of Man is within you.
> Follow after him!
>
> *Gospel of Mary 8, NHS11 pp.458–59*

Likewise, in the *Preaching of Andrew,* Jesus says:

> Let your hearts be strengthened by my Name,
> and you shall learn that I am with you,
> and dwell within you.
>
> *Preaching of Andrew, MAA p.10*

The 'form' that dwells within is the Word, which manifests as a radiant form. But this is only known when the "heart" is "strengthened by my Name" – when the soul is made spiritually strong by listening to the divine Music. The same idea is expressed in the *Acts of Peter:*

> Let us therefore bow our knees to Christ,
> who hears us, though we cry not;
> It is he that sees us.
> Though he is not seen with these eyes, yet is he within us;
> If we will, he will not forsake us.
> Let us therefore purify our souls of every evil temptation,
> and God will not depart from us.
> Truly, if we but wink with our eyes, he is present with us.
>
> *Acts of Peter 18; cf. ANT p.320*

From his place within, the master watches his disciple, seeing everything. Once initiated, he does not leave a soul, but will see it through to the end, purifying it of all past sins. He is so close that to a pure and loving soul, he can be contacted behind the eyes – in the twinkling of an eye. As Judas Thomas says in the *Acts of Thomas:*

> Jesus, you who continually reveals yourself to us, . . .
> you have given us this power,
> to ask and to receive;
> And have not only permitted this,
> but have taught us to pray:
> You who cannot be seen with our bodily eyes,
> but is never hidden from the eyes of our soul.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 53; cf. ANT pp.389–90*

Jesus is one who has taught his disciples how to pray correctly so that he may be seen, not with the "bodily eyes", but with the "eyes of the soul". Likewise, Judas Thomas says to one who wishes to see Jesus:

> He appears not to these bodily eyes,
> but is found by the eyes of the mind.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 65; cf. ANT p.395*

And again:

> As far as you are able, stretch your mind upward,
> because he is not visible now to these bodily eyes.
>
> *Acts of Thomas VII, AAA p.203*

There are a number of other references to the inner form in the *Acts of Thomas.* In one, the devotee Mygdonia prays that she may soon leave this world, and be united with the spiritual form of Jesus:

> Would that the days pass swiftly from me, O my mother,
> and that all the hours were one,
> that I might go forth from this world,
> and go the sooner to behold that beautiful one,
> of whom I have heard tell, even that living one and giver of life.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 129; cf. AAA p.265, ANT p.421*

Most people have no inkling of such inner experiences and cannot begin to comprehend a yearning of this intensity. But the mystic literature of the world is full of such descriptions. Again in the *Acts of Thomas,* Judas Thomas says:

> My eyes, O Christ, look upon you (within myself),
> and my heart exults with joy.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 146; cf. ANT p.429*

Every devotee of a master longs to see their master within, on the inner planes. This is what a Manichaean psalmist also means when writing:

> Jesus Christ, in whom I have believed,
> show yourself to me quickly, and save me.
> O merciful and good, full of mercy. . . .
> O Firstborn, Jesus, whom I have loved,
> do not forsake me in my tribulations.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXXII; cf. MPB p.91*

In a number of places, the Coptic *Kephalaia* also speaks specifically of the

> light form – the one who shall appear to everyone who will go out from his body, corresponding to the pattern of the image of the Apostle (Mānī).
>
> *Kephalaia 36; cf. KOT p.40*

This "light form", which is recognizable as the master, is also the "redeemer". According to Manichaean belief, at the time of death ("coming forth"), the soul is also met by an angel who brings with it the "victory prize". The "kiss" symbolizes a mystic touch of soul to soul:

> At the time of their coming forth, the light form shall come forth before them; and she redeems them from the darkness to the light. This light

> form calms the person – with the kiss and with her quiet – from fear of the demons who would destroy his body. By her appearance and her image, the heart of the elect one, who has come forth from his body, will be at peace. Afterwards, the angel who holds the victory prize extends to him the Right Hand; and it draws him out of the abyss of his body, and accepts him inwardly with the kiss and with love. And that soul will make obeisance to its redeemer, who is this light form.
>
> *Kephalaia 41; cf. KOT p.46*

In the Parthian hymns, a term used for the spiritual form is *pādgirb,* the divine form, manifestation, epiphany, or appearance – the term is used for the divine form of the soul, the saviour, and God. Often, the context does not make the meaning entirely clear, though in reality the divine form of God, the saviour, and the soul are all one. The term is used in similar contexts to *čihrag* (form, nature). Thus, the soul expresses its longing to see this form:

> You are worthy of praise,
> beneficent Father, primeval Ancestor!
> Blessed are you, beneficent God!…
> In your compassion, be merciful unto us:
> Show us your form *(čihrag),*
> the divine epiphany *(pādgirb)* for which we yearn.
> Let your brightness shine upon us,
> sweet Fountain and Breath of Life!
> Make us, your children, strong.
>
> *Manichaean Hymns, RMP ak, PAH pp.439–40; cf. GSR p.32*

Likewise, the "captive soul" is exhorted:

> Look up to the mighty, divine form *(pādgirb)* of the beloved fathers.
> The devoted, virtuous believers and the blissful hearers
> will find their own divine nature *(čihrag).*
> The beneficent ones will reach the divine palace.
> This is what awaits the blissful elect and the praiseworthy hearers;
> This is the devotion that is necessary to save the soul.
>
> *Manichaean Hymns, MM3 p.876ff., RMP bc; cf. GSR p.49, ML p.49*

See also: **astral form**, **image**.

1. See also *John* 14:16–18.
2. *Mark* 9:2–9; *Matthew* 17:1–9; *Luke* 9:28–36.
3. *Luke* 17:21; *Gospel of Thomas* 32:3, *NHS20* pp.52–53.

dod (He) *Lit.* beloved, uncle; dear friend; hence, both God and the spiritual master; also, spiritual love; sometimes rendered as *dowd;* from the same root as 'David', which is why the biblical King David was called the 'beloved' of God.

The term is used throughout the biblical *Song of Songs,* both for God and the master as the beloved and for the soul as the lover. Jewish and Christian mystics and sages have generally agreed that the *Song of Songs* is written in metaphors containing great spiritual and mystical depth, although its style may have originated in worldly love songs. This is the reason for its inclusion in the canonical Bible, and why so many mystical commentaries have been written about it. The love expressed is so intimate and continuous that it is often difficult to tell when God is speaking as the beloved or when it is the beloved disciple expressing his love for God or for the spiritual master. Here, it is the lover expressing his love for the master, since it is he, in his spiritual form, who "comes leaping upon the mountains" of the inner heavens. It is also the master who calls the disciples spiritually from within to rise up from the body and leave this world:

> The voice of my beloved *(dod)!*
> Behold, he comes leaping upon the mountains,
> skipping upon the hills.
> My beloved *(dod)* is like a gazelle or a young hart: . . .
> My beloved *(dod)* spoke, and said to me,
> "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away."
>
> *Song of Songs 2:8–10, KB*

The devotee responds by expressing his devotion to the Divine and the feeling of their mutual love:

> My beloved *(dod)* is mine, and I am his:
> he feeds among the lilies.
>
> *Song of Songs 2:16, KB*

See also: **beloved** (7.2).

doorkeeper, **gatekeeper**, **porter** (Gk. *thyrōros*) The inner spiritual form of the master or saviour, who 'opens' the inner door to the spiritual realms, whenever he finds the disciple ready for that meeting. Since the point at which the soul leaves the body and enters the inner realms has been called the inner door, so the spiritual form of the master, who waits by this door to receive his disciple, has been called the doorkeeper, sometimes translated by the more old-fashioned term for a doorkeeper – a porter.[1]

In a Christian context, the metaphor is first encountered in John's gospel, in the parable of the good shepherd:

> He that enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
> To him the doorkeeper *(thyrōros)* opens, and the sheep hear his voice:
> and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out.
> And when he leads forth his own sheep, he goes before them,
> and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.
> And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him:
> For they know not the voice of strangers. . . .
>
> I am the door of the sheep. . . .
> I am the door: by me if any man enter in,
> he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. . . .
> I have come that they might have life,
> and that they might have it more abundantly.
>
> *John 10:2–5, 7, 9–10; cf. KJV, RSV*

Using the double meaning so typical of John's gospel, the sheep (the disciples) hear the Voice of the shepherd: they hear the inner Voice or Sound of God, and the mystic door is opened for them by the doorkeeper, the spiritual form of the saviour.

The unknown author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and the *Letter of Private Direction* refers to this parable and interprets it in a spiritual manner:

> Many mistakenly believe that they are inside the spiritual door, when in reality they are still standing outside. What is more, there they will continue to be until they learn to seek the door in humility. Some find it quickly, and enter sooner than others. That of course, depends on the doorkeeper, and not on the merits or gifts of the individual.
>
> And a marvellous household it is, this life of the spirit, for not only is our Lord the doorkeeper, but he the door as well. As God, he is "doorkeeper", as man, he is the "door".
>
> *Book of Privy Counselling 9; cf. CU pp.162–63, CUCW p.186*

As God, says the writer, he has the power to open the door as and when he sees fit. As man, he is the door by which human beings may approach the inner life of the spirit.

Using the same imagery as *John,* the Manichaean *Psalms of Heracleidēs* contain an evocative passage in which the devotee longingly begs the "doorkeeper" to open the inner door:

I have long been calling you, my saviour,
until you should answer me. . . .
Where is the boiling of your mercies,
that you have suffered me to be so long in my prayer?
If my voice has reached you,
then how has your mercy tarried?
If I have turned to you a little,
you ought to turn to me much. . . .
I have wearied of calling you:
O doorkeeper *(thyrōros),* open the door to me.
I will not stem my tears, O powerful one,
unless you wipe away my sin.

Psalms of Heracleidēs, Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.188

The "porter", as the carrier or conveyer of souls back to the Divine, also makes a common appearance in the Manichaean *Kephalaia* preserved in Coptic. He is the "Column of Glory, the perfect Man, he who is the bearer beneath all things, the great Column of Blessing, the great Porter who is greater that all the porters".[2] Though the Manichaean cosmogony is complex, the "Column of Glory" (in Parthian, the *Srōshahrāy*) is equated with the "Living Voice and Divine Song".[3] It is the divine music of the creative power.

See also: **shepherd**, **Srōshahrāy** (3.1), **transfiguration**.

1. *E.g.* King James Version of John's gospel.
2. *Kephalaia* 4, *KOT* p.29.
3. *Manichaean Hymns, MBB* p.18*ff.; cf. GSR* p.135, *ML* p.65.

durr, **durrah** (A), **dur**, **durrat** (P) *Lit.* pearl; a common image, appearing in expressions such as *dur rekhtan* (to scatter pearls), hence, to shed tears or to speak eloquently; in Sufism, that which is precious and pure, as in *al-Durrat al-Bayḍā'* (the White Pearl), a name for the primal undifferentiated 'Substance' from which all creation emanated; also, the *Qur'ān,* the pearls of wisdom in a wise man's discourse, verses of Persian poetry (especially the couplets of a *ghazal*), the final goal of union with God, the higher Reality within the shell of form, divine love, recollection *(dhikr),* tears of love and longing, Muḥammad, a mystic or master (inner or outer form), a metaphor for beautiful teeth (the mouth being described as a casket of pearls or as two rows of pearls), and so on. According to oriental folklore, pearls are raindrops, generally spring rain, that mature inside an oyster.

Sufis have used the metaphor in a wide variety of contexts. Ibn al-Fāriḍ depicts attainment of the spiritual goal as recovering "a pearl beyond compare":

I dived into the sea of union,
dived deeper still for solitude,
and so recovered the pearl beyond compare *(durrat al-yatīm).*
Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Tā'īyah 725, DFQM p.281; cf. in SVSL pp.280–81

The words of the saints are also portrayed as pearls. Sanā'ī is speaking of the human form of the master, and his words of wisdom, when he writes:

Where your throat speaks,
pearls *(dur)* fill the ear;
Where your step strides,
souls line the wayside.
Sanā'ī, Dīvān 128, AMM p.870; cf. in SSE1 p.113

Speaking of Muḥammad in particular, but of all saints in general, Rūmī writes that these "pearls" have their origins in the divine "Sea":

All his words were pearls *(durr)* of the Sea,
for his heart had a passage to the Sea.
Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:816; cf. MJR6 p.303

Sanā'ī, however, describes the *Qur'ān* as only the "ocean's foam" or the "shell". The real "pearls", he says, are to be found within the "heart":

You who have got in your palm but the ocean's foam, . . . you have not laid hold of the pearl's *(dur)* true substance, for you are occupied only with the shell. Withhold your hand from these lacklustre shells, and bring up the bright pearl *(dur-ṣāfī)* from the ocean depths. The pearl *(guhar)* without its shell is cherished in the heart; the shell without its pearl *(guhar)* is clay to be discarded. The value of the pearl *(dur)* comes not from the shell – the arrow's value comes from its hitting the mark.

He who knows the pebbles of the seafloor from seeing them himself, will not mistake sheep's dung for pearls *(dur)* of the sea. But he who only stands upon the shore can lay no claim to its shining pearls *(lu'lu'-i lālā).*
Sanā'ī, Ḥadīqat al-Ḥaqīqat 1, HHGP p.91; cf. HHG pp.152–53

Rūmī says that within his heart lies the "image" or light form of his master, which he depicts as a "pearl":

My heart is an oyster,
the image of the friend is its pearl *(dur)* –

But now I am no longer contained,
for this house is filled with Him.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 576:6098, KSD2 p.29;
cf. MP1 (70:1) p.62, in SPL p.264

See also: **al-Durrat al-Bayḍā**ʾ (2.2), **gawhar** (▸4) **lu**ʾ**lu**ʾ, **pearl** (3.1, 5.1).

dūsh (P) *Lit.* shoulder; also, night, yesterday; in Sufism, metaphorically, the shoulders of the master or *murshid* who bears the burden of the disciple's sins, or who ferries the disciple across this world to the spiritual realms by carrying the boat bearing his disciple on his shoulders, without the disciple ever realizing it; also, a part of a family of Sufi metaphors that compares the beauty of the divine beloved to a beautiful woman or a handsome man; said by ʿIrāqī to symbolize the Attribute of divine glory.[1] His divine glory is an aspect of His *jalāl* (might, majesty, power), which inspires awe, as opposed to *jamāl* (beauty, lovingkindness), which inspires love.

In Sufi symbolism, the shoulder is sometimes linked metaphorically with the bosom. While the bosom *(bar)* signifies the protection, care and nurturing of God, and is an aspect of *jamāl,* the shoulder *(dūsh)* represents His might and majesty. Both aspects of the Divine feature in the life of the lover of God. Sanāʾī sees them as the devotional focus *(qiblah)* of all souls:

All goodness abounding lies in your embrace *(āgūsh):*
the *qiblah* of souls is your shoulder *(dūsh)* and bosom *(bar).*
Sanāʾī, Dīvān 16, AMM p.800; cf. in SSE1 pp.12–13

Hence, Ḥāfiẓ writes:

Alas, my heart and faith, my heart and faith
have been stolen from me
by her bosom *(bar)* and shoulder *(dūsh), . . .*
her bosom *(bar)* and shoulder *(dūsh).*
O Ḥāfiẓ, the remedy, the remedy is
her sweet lip *(lab),* her sweet lip *(lab)!*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.145, DIH p.253; cf. DHWC (323:7–8) p.560

The "lip *(lab)*" is said to signify both the divine Word, as well as the outpouring of divine grace.

See also: **bar**, **lab**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.68, *RLRI* p.89.

eikōn (Gk) *Lit.* image; a term used for the light form or radiant form of a master. See **image**.

face, **countenance** The inner spiritual form of a master; the inner manifestation of the divine beloved; common in Sufi poetry where a variety of terms are used, including *chihrah, liqā', rū,* and *rukh.* Some Christian mystics have likewise had visions of the face or countenance of Christ. Teresa of Ávila, for example, recounts visions of Christ in which at first she sees just his hands, before seeing his complete face:

> One day, while I was at prayer, the Lord (Jesus) was pleased to show me just his hands, which were so very beautiful that I would be unable to exaggerate their beauty. This caused me great fear; any supernatural favour the Lord grants me frightens me at first, when it is new. After a few days, I also saw that divine face, which seemed to leave me completely absorbed. Since he later granted me the favour of seeing him entirely, I could not understand why the Lord showed himself to me in this way, little by little, until later I realized that his majesty was leading me in accordance with my natural weakness. May he be blessed forever, for so much glory all at once would have been unbearable for so lowly and wretched a subject as I; knowing this, the merciful Lord prepared me by degrees.
>
> It may seem to your Reverence that no great strength was required to behold those hands and so beautiful a face. But glorified bodies have such beauty that the sight of such supernatural beauty deriving from glory causes bewilderment. Thus the vision caused me such great fear that I was plunged into turmoil and confusion, although afterwards I began to feel such certainty and security, and felt such other effects, that my fear was soon lost.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Life 28:1–2; cf. CWT1 p.237, CWTA1 pp.178–79*

The thirteenth-century Flemish mystic Hadewijch also had visions of an inner countenance from which she "received all understanding":

> One Easter Sunday, I had gone to God; and He embraced me in my interior senses and took me away in spirit. He brought me before the countenance of the Holy Spirit, who possesses the Father and the Son in one Essence. And from the total Being of that countenance I received all understanding, and thus I read all my judgments. A Voice issuing from this countenance resounded so fearfully that it made itself heard above everything. And it said to me: "Behold,

> ancient one, you have called me and sought me, what and who I, Love, am, myriads of years before the birth of man! See and receive my Spirit!
>
> *Hadewijch, Vision 3, HCW p.272*

There is considerable symbolic content in the visions of Hadewijch, often reminiscent of those of the biblical prophet Ezekiel. Of another vision, she recalls:

> It was on a certain feast of the Epiphany: I was then nineteen years old.... It was my will to go to our Lord; for at this time I experienced desires and an exceedingly strong longing.... On this day, because of my longing, I was again strongly moved in love. And then I was taken up in a spirit and carried on to where a vast and awe-inspiring place was shown me, and in this strong place stood a seat. And he who sat upon it was invisible and incomprehensible in the dignity of the jurisdiction he exercised on that height.
>
> *Hadewijch, Vision 6, HCW p.278*

An angel then intervenes on her behalf, requesting that since he has brought her into his presence, he should reveal "his countenance":

> And then I heard a Voice speaking to me; it was terrible and unheard-of. It spoke to me with imagery and said: "Behold who I am!" And I saw him whom I sought. His countenance revealed itself with such clarity that I recognized in it all the countenances and all the forms that ever existed and ever shall exist.
>
> *Hadewijch, Vision 6, HCW pp.278–79*

A study of mystics from the different traditions reveals that their mystical experiences almost invariably reflect their spiritual and religious faith and expectations. It is like the clouds in the sky. Clouds have no particular shape, but when looked at carefully, individuals may see a variety of images that reflect the content of their own minds. Bearing this in mind, it is difficult to say whether St Teresa, Hadewijch and others have really had visions of Christ, or whether they have had an experience of something more universal, given a certain shape by the content of their own minds. It is certainly not pure imagination, but seems to be an overlay of beliefs and aspirations upon the experience of a higher reality.

The *Macarian Homilies,* for instance, describe an experience of inner light in Christocentric terms, in which the soul is "illuminated" by the "light of the face of Christ":

> The soul who has been perfectly illuminated by the ineffable beauty of the glory of the light of the face of Christ, and is in perfect communion with the Holy Spirit, and has become worthy to be the dwelling place and throne of God, becomes all eye, all light, all face, all glory, all Spirit, being so made by Christ, who drives, and guides, and carries, and bears her about, and graces and adorns her with this spiritual beauty.
>
> *Macarian Homilies 1:2; cf. SHME p.2*

In the *Odes of Solomon,* "Thy face was with me" implies a constant awareness of the inner presence of the divine beloved:

> I was rescued from my bonds and unto Thee, my God, I fled;
> For Thou art the Right Hand of my deliverance,
> and my helper.
> Thou hast restrained them that rise up against me,
> and I have seen them no more;
> Because Thy face was with me, which saved me, by Thy grace.
>
> *Odes of Solomon 25:1–4, OSD p.114*

In the Manichaean texts, the face of the saviour is once again an inner mystical experience:

> He will appear to you, . . . with a face full of joy;
> He will wash you also, and purify you with his pleasant Dews.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXXIX; cf. MPB p.100*

There are many instances in these texts where the devotee appeals to the inner saviour to reveal his "face". Such a vision or revelation will always appear to the inner eye of the devotee:

> Jesus, light of the faithful,
> I beseech you, do not forsake me.
> Reveal your face to me, O holy and unsullied brightness:
> for you are my good shepherd, my true merciful physician.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCLII; cf. MPB p.61*

And likewise:

> Open to me, O Tree of Life:
> O Tree of Rest, open to me.
> Open to me your essences that I may contemplate
> the face of the holy ones (the saviours).

Open to me your palaces,
for my heart has been faint for your joy.
Open to me your paradises,
that my spirit may receive your Fragrance.
My robe is ready, that I may return to my Father rejoicing.
Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.154

And in a hymn from the Parthian texts:

Come now, show mercy upon us.
Reveal your bright countenance
and your most lovely image,
to us who long to turn to it,
so that we may become glad and joyful.
For long have we ardently desired it.
Manichaean Hymns MM3 p.849ff., RMP ac; cf. GSR p.255, ML p.137

See also: **chihrah**, **image**, **liqā'**, **rū**, **rukh**, **visions** (▸3).

familiar See **twin**.

faraqlīṭ (A) *Lit.* paraclete; mediator, intermediary, advocate; comforter; an arabicization of the Greek *paraklētos,* which is the Holy Ghost or "Comforter" of John's gospel, which Jesus says will come after him, and which he will send to his disciples;[1] the spiritual form of the divine beloved experienced on the inner planes.

In Muslim belief, based on a verse in the *Qur'ān,* the Comforter or Paraclete of John's gospel is Muḥammad, here called Aḥmad ('Most Praised'):

> And when Jesus son of Mary said: "O Children of Israel! I am the messenger of *Allāh* to you, confirming that which was revealed before me in the *Torah,* and bringing good tidings of a messenger who comes after me, whose name is Aḥmad." Yet when he came to them with clear signs, they said: "This is plain sorcery."
> *Qur'ān 61:6; cf. MGK*

Among the Sufis, this is interpreted to mean that the Paraclete is equivalent to the *Ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadīyah* (Reality of Muḥammad), which is the Spirit, Light or creative power of the Divine, also called the *al-Rūḥ al-Aʿẓam* (the Supreme Spirit), *al-ʿAql al-Awwal* (the First Intelligence), and by various other names.

See also: **paraclete**.

1. *John* 14:16, 26; 15:26, 16:7.

fǎshēn (C) *Lit. dharma (fǎ)* body *(shēn);* a term adopted into Daoism from Buddhism to indicate the highest embodiment of the pure *Dào* – hence, the spiritual body; equivalent to *yángshén* (radiant spirit) and *zhēnxìng* (real, true, or perfect form).

Fǎshēn equates to the Buddhist term *dharmakāya,* one of the three bodies (C. *sānshēn,* S. *trikāya*) of a *buddha,* according to *Mahāyāna* Buddhism. The *dharmakāya* is the spiritual or true body of a *buddha,* the body of Reality itself, without specific delimited form.[1]

Fǎshēn is the unmanifested aspect of the *Dào* in all beings – out of which they come into existence, and into which they merge upon dissolution. In Daoism, it therefore conveys the meaning of eternal life force, the state of nature as it is, the essential nature of a thing, the Truth body or Reality body, and hence, spiritual body.

See also: **dharmakāya**, **fǎshēn** (▸1).

1. See Reginald Ray, *Secret of the Vajra World, SVWT* p.13.

giluy Eliyahu (He) *Lit.* revelation *(giluy)* of Elijah; a revelation transmitted by the prophet Elijah; used from rabbinic times (post C2nd CE) for the receipt of mystical inspiration or knowledge. Many Jewish mystics over the centuries have described their spiritual illumination as originating in a mystical revelation bestowed by the prophet Elijah in an inner experience or dream.

According to the biblical story, Elijah's disciple and successor Elisha witnessed his master's ascent to heaven, transported by a whirlwind in a "chariot of fire", drawn by "horses of fire".[1] Elijah was subsequently transformed by Jewish mystical tradition into a legendary figure who brings inner knowledge and illumination. Claiming that an insight or understanding had come about through 'revelation by Elijah' would give the stamp of traditional authority to teachings that may otherwise have been entirely new, without precedent in the accepted texts. It made even the most radical teaching stand clear of any accusation of foreign influence or heresy. This is not to imply that the mystics simply used the notion of *giluy Eliyahu* to guarantee that their teachings would be accepted. On the contrary, it is well attested that these kabbalists and *ḥasidim* did experience mystic illumination, which inspired them to innovate techniques of mystical prayer, and thus gain a deeper understanding of the celestial mysteries.

The twelfth-century Rabbi Abraham ben Isaac, head of the rabbinical court of Narbonne in Provence, southern France, attributed his higher understanding to a revelation from the prophet Elijah. This revelation was conveyed to him through his talmudic master, the greatly revered scholar Judah ben Barzillai of Barcelona. Judah possessed an extensive collection of esoteric manuscripts, which he incorporated into a commentary on the *Sefer Yeẓirah* ('Book of Formation'). It is believed that Judah secretly practised the mystic path, guided by revelations from Elijah, and that he passed on these esoteric teachings to his disciple Rabbi Abraham ben Isaac, who in turn passed them on to his son-in-law Rabbi Abraham ben David (known as the Rabad), a mystic and active talmudic scholar in the nearby city of Posquières.

Menaḥem Recanati, a thirteenth-century Italian kabbalist, also wrote of the 'revelation of Elijah' as something transmitted from one mystic to another, specifically from Rabbi David to his son, the Rabad. There is probably no discrepancy here. There is no reason why the Rabad would not have had more than one spiritual mentor:

> For he (Elijah) revealed himself to Rabbi David, head of the rabbinical court, and taught him the mysteries of the Kabbalah. He transmitted it, for his part, to his son, the Rabad (Rabbi Abraham ben David), and he (Elijah) also revealed himself to him, and he transmitted it to his son, Isaac the Blind, blind from birth, and to him, too, he revealed himself. The latter, in turn, transmitted these teachings to two disciples of his, Rabbi Ezra, author of a commentary to the *Song of Songs,* and Rabbi Azriel of Gerona, after which it was transmitted to the Ramban (Naḥmanides of Gerona).
>
> *Menaḥem Recanati, Perush al ha-Torah, PTMR, in PSHC p.103*

The Rabad and his close colleague Rabbi Jacob of Lunel also attributed their mystical understanding to *giluy Eliyahu,* an indication that they had experienced inner sources of knowledge and mystic wisdom. The Rabad wrote: "The holy spirit has already appeared in our school," and "it was revealed to me from the mysteries of God, which he (Elijah) communicates to those who fear Him."[2] Among the secret teachings attributed to Abraham ben Isaac and the Rabad were techniques of mystical prayer, in which names of God and secret combinations of letters and words were used.

A modern historian of Jewish mysticism summarizes the spiritual influence received from Elijah by this group of mystics:

> It is clear that Rabad was a leader of a group of esotericists, and that he was not the first to lead such a group in Provence. The kabbalists describe a chain of tradition in the rabbinic academies of Provence,

> expressed sometimes as a series of revelations from the prophet Elijah, of which Rabad and his son are later links.
>
> *Joseph Dan, Early Kabbalah, EKD p.31*

Giluy Eliyahu was not an isolated phenomenon. The *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* (C12th–13th German Pietists) also attributed the source of their revelations to Elijah, particularly Eleʿazar of Worms and his direct disciples. In fact, most of the *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz* and the kabbalists, as well as many earlier mystics, attributed their illumination to Elijah. Even ordinary people received revelations from Elijah to guide them on their way. They would beg forgiveness of their sins from Elijah, and would credit him with answers to problems received in dreams:

> It is by no means the mystics alone who encounter him; he may just as well reveal himself to the simple Jew in distress as to one perfect in saintliness and learning. As the zealot of God in the Bible, he was the guarantor of the tradition.
>
> *Gershom Scholem, Origins of the Kabbalah, OKGS p.36*

A parallel source of revelation is also found in mystical Islam:

> A notion analogous to that of *giluy Eliyahu* can be found in Sufi mysticism in the accounts of revelations of Khiḍr (a legendary prophet). Reports or testimonies concerning such revelations exist with regard to Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (1165–1240) of Andalusia, who shortly before 1200 – the time of Rabad and Isaac the Blind – was still wandering about in Spain.
>
> *Gershom Scholem, Origins of the Kabbalah, OKGS p.246, on PMAH p.28*

The divine illumination experienced by many later kabbalists was also attributed to Elijah. The sixteenth-century Rabbi Isaac Luria, during his youth in Egypt, spent seven years secluded in an isolated cottage on the banks of the Nile. It has been recorded that he had frequent internal visions and interviews with the prophet Elijah, by whom he was initiated into the divine path. He also recounted that during his sleep his soul ascended to heaven, where he conversed with many great mystics of the past. As the greatly revered master of a group of close disciples, his authority was partially derived from his ability to ascend to supernal realms and converse "mouth to mouth" with Elijah, who taught him spiritual mysteries and secrets. As his disciple Ḥayyim Vital remarks, "Elijah would constantly reveal himself to him, speaking directly to him, and instruct him in these mysteries;"[3] and:

> The secrets of the *Torah* and its mysteries will not be revealed to humans through the power of material matters, but through the godly

> flow *(shefa elohi),* which is influenced by His Holiness on high through the medium of messengers and angels, or through Elijah the prophet, remembered for his goodness. . . .
>
> And indeed, in each generation there are a selected few upon whom the holy spirit descends, and Elijah the prophet, remembered for the good, is revealed to them and teaches them the secrets of this wisdom.
>
> *Ḥayyim Vital, Sefer Ḥayyim, Introduction, in IEHO pp.67–68*

In early-eighteenth-century Italy, Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto was recognized as a great kabbalist and messianic figure as well as an ethicist. His disciple Yekuthi´el Gordon relates in a letter how first he witnessed an angel *(maggid)* appearing to Luzzatto who spoke holy mysteries through him; then "my master orders Elijah to come to him, and he comes to impart mysteries of his own."[4]

The spiritual wisdom of the Baʿal Shem Tov and many of the Hasidic masters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was also attributed, at least in part, to *giluy Eliyahu.* Modern scholar Lawrence Fine summarizes:

> To the kabbalists, a vision and/or auditory experience of Elijah *(giluy Eliyahu)* was among the most exalted forms of heavenly communication that an individual could experience. . . . Thus, the claims concerning Isaac Luria's relationship to Elijah take their place in a long tradition involving other kabbalists before him. . . . What Luria learned from these different heavenly sources consisted in kabbalistic knowledge of the *Torah,* that is, mystical interpretations of sacred texts, in addition to other kinds of esoteric information, such as the soul-ancestries of his disciples.
>
> *Lawrence Fine, Physician of the Soul, PSHC pp.96–97*

See also: **angelic visions** (**in Judaism**), **maggid**.

1. *2 Kings* 2:1–11.
2. Rabbi Abraham ben David, in *OKGS* p.206; see also Rabbi Abraham ben David's glosses on Maimonides' *Mishnah Torah, Mishkab u-Moshab* 7:7, *Lulab* 8:5, in *RPTT* pp.286–300.
3. Ḥayyim Vital, *Shaʿar ha-Gilgulim, SGHV* p.27, in *PSHC* p.96.
4. Yekuthi´el Gordon, *Letters,* in *RMHL* pp.18–19; *cf.* in *SBJT* p.169.

gul (P) *Lit.* rose, flower; in Persian poetic imagery, a symbol of beauty, the beloved; in Sufi symbolism, the beauty and glory of the divine beloved, often described as the face of the beloved, referring to the inner and entirely spiritual beloved; often depicted as the focus of the bulbul's love, singing in constant yearning for the beauty and fragrance of the rose. Since *gul* makes an easy rhyme with

bulbul, the imagery is common in Persian poetry, where the bulbul refers not to any of the various species of bulbul, but to the Eurasian nightingale, a well-known songster used in poetic imagery.

According to a *ḥadīth* highlighted by Rūzbihān Baqlī, "The red rose is a manifestation of the divine Beauty."[1] Whether the Sufis took their lead from Muḥammad in this respect is uncertain, for the rose has a long history as a poetic image. But there is no doubt that it is one of the most commonly used metaphors in all Persian Sufi poetry. ʿAṭṭār speaks of his intoxication on seeing the spiritual form of the beloved, the divine "rose":

When I saw the rose *(gul)* of the beloved's face,
I sang out like a drunken nightingale *(bulbul-i mast).*
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān, Tarjīʿāt 1:1382, DASN p.83; cf. in SSE4 p.40

Saʿdī writes of the devotee's longing for the company of the spiritual beloved:

Since the rose *(gul)* of your face
has bloomed in the garden of Beauty,
the veil of my patience has been more completely rent
than the petals of a rose *(gul).*
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 18:5, KSSS p.349; cf. BOS p.22

In hot climates, roses flower in spring, before the summer heat dries everything up. Spring, too, is regarded as the season of love, and is commonly woven into poetic imagery. Likewise, the thorn that accompanies the rose is used in reference to the pain of longing to be with the beloved:

There is no longer a mystic *(ṣāḥib-dil)*
who in this spring season
is not in love with the rose *(gul),*
and wounded by its thorn.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 53:4, KSSS p.357; cf. BOS p.58

In another verse, Saʿdī equates separation from the beloved to the inability to drink from the "Fountain of Life *(Chashmah-ʾi Ḥayvān)*", a metaphor for the divine creative power. He is indicating that the spiritual essence of the beloved is this divine power:

O cruel beloved . . . how long, pray,
will you be estranged from us.
How long shall we be distracted by you?
How long must we look at the rose *(gul)* with longing from afar,
while our feet are pierced with thorns?

How long must we return thirsty
from the Fountain of Life *(Chashmah-ʾi Ḥayvān)?*
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 54:1–2, KSSS p.358; cf. BOS p.59

Saʿdī is also clear that the focus of his love is not of this world:

My friends tell me:
"Saʿdī, pitch your tent in a rose garden *(gulzār)*" –
But I love a rose *(gul)* that grows in no rose garden *(gulzār).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 39:13, KSSS p.251; cf. TOS p.56

O rosebush *(gulban)* of the garden of spirituality *(bustān-i rūḥānī)!*
You have made me indifferent to this rose garden *(gulistān)!*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 248:7, KSSS p.300; cf. TOS p.339

Ḥāfiẓ is perhaps alluding to the eternal music of the divine power when he depicts the beloved as a bulbul in love with the divine "rose", singing songs of divine "love" in the "garden" of eternity:

Be glad of heart, O bulbul, in union with the rose *(gul):*
for, in the garden, the warblings of love are all yours.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.29, DIH p.80; cf. DHWC (21:3) p.73

Since the rose is the beloved, so the rose garden is where the beloved lives – eternity. Saʿdī writes that the lover has to tolerate the ways of the beloved (the "gardener"). He equates the soul with the rose, who is pruned and shaped by the divine "gardener", sometimes drastically, in order to promote abundant growth and flowers:

The lover who yearns for the rose garden *(bustān)*
must needs put up with the Gardener.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 101:3, KSSS p.370, BOS p.111

In a similar verse, the "gardener" is perhaps God, to whom lovers may sometimes complain concerning their separation from the inner master (the "rose"); or, indeed, they could be complaining to the master about their separation from God. Either way, it is all the talk of lovers of the Divine, lost in their love of both God and their master, yearning for divine union:

The nightingales (lovers) have great courage
to complain about the gardener to the rose *(gul).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 318:8, KSSS p.318; cf. TOS p.429

Addressing the soul, Saʿdī also depicts the "rose" as the source of inner spiritual "life". Here, the "garden" is the inner being:

O bulbul-lover, ask for life.
For, in the end, your garden will grow green,
and the red rose *(gul)* will appear in your heart.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.54, DIH p.130; cf. DHWC (159:8) p.312

The meaning of poetic metaphors is never set in stone, and a poet can take them where he fancies. Sometimes, the rose garden *(gulistān)*) – which usually signifies eternity – refers to the pleasures of this world, and the love of the nightingale for the rose represents worldly love:

I shall not repair to the rose garden *(gulistān)*
as long as you are in my embrace:
If the nightingale *(bulbul)* should chance to see your face,
it would not seek the rose *(gul).*
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 76:5, KSSS p.364; cf. BOS p.86

Rūmī, one of the greatest and most imaginative of the mystic poets of Islam, uses the imagery of the rose, the rose garden, the thorns and the nightingale in about as many ways as could possibly be imagined. But for him, too, the rose is often the mystic beloved, whose origin is not "in this world". The "world of imagination *(ʿālam-i khayāl)*" is this world, where all forms are spun out of the hidden aspects of the mind:

The rose *(gul)* is from that world,
it cannot be contained in this world.
How can the image of the rose *(khayāl-i gul)*
be contained in the world of imagination *(ʿālam-i khayāl)?*
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1348:14256, KSD3 p.154; cf. in SPL p.266

This divine "rose", he repeats, is different from the "rose" of this world:

Fleet of foot as the wind am I for love of the rose *(gul),*
not the rose *(gul)* that for fear of the autumn wind
flees from the garden.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 900:9440, KSD2 p.203, MP1 (116:7) p.100

Become silent, he advises, before a "rose" of this kind – the "king of 'Say'",[2] implying either God or the saints through whom He speaks:

Hark, be silent that the king of 'Say *(Qul)*' may speak:
do not play the nightingale with a rose *(gul)* of this kind.

This eloquent rose *(gul)* is full of song and cry:
O nightingale, let your tongue cease; become all ear!
Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:1815–16; cf. MJR6 p.359

This divine beloved, he says, is within the soul, though the soul may not always be able to find him there:

That rose *(gul)* which is in the centre of the soul's garden *(bāgh)*
came not into our embrace tonight.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 711:7449, KSD2 p.100; cf. in TSR p.91

See also: **bulbul**.

1. Rūzbihān, *Mashrab al-Arwāḥ* 16:24, *MARB* p.272.
2. *Qur'ān* 2:80, 91, *passim.*

gurudev(a) (H), **gurdev** (Pu) *Lit.* shining *(dev)* master *(guru);* divine master; an epithet or form of address given to a *guru;* sometimes, as the radiant, light or *Shabd* form of the *guru.* Maharaj Sawan Singh explains:

> The word *dev* comes from the root *div,* which means light. By *gurdev* is meant the light or astral form of the master. Theosophists also say that in the astral and causal planes the form of the master is very bright and is visible for many miles. Tulsīdās Jī says that the nails of the feet of the master shine like diamonds and, by meditating on them, divine sight is developed.[1] . . .
>
> The term *gurdev* is . . . used to refer to the inner light form of the *satgur* (true *guru*). This form is free, and beyond the bondage of body and mind. It can be seen with the sight faculty of the soul only. When it appears, all doubts are removed and the disciple's service bears true fruit. . . .
>
> This light form remains with the disciple in the eternal regions as well as in the regions of *Brahm,* and unites him with *sat Purush* (true Being). There is no difference between the *guru,* the *satgur,* and the Lord. These are merely the names of different forms of the same current of the Lord. Owing to the law of 'like attracts like', when the Lord appears in human form to redeem souls, he is called the *guru.* His real form, which has existed from the beginning and throughout many ages, and is very bright, is called *gurdev.* This form is very blessed. . . .
>
> In the human form, he is called a *guru.* In his light form, he accompanies us to the subtle, causal and spiritual regions, and merges into the form of *satgur,* . . . and becomes indistinguishable from him. The *gurdev* is the connecting link between the *guru* and *sat Purush* (true

Lord).... When the soul currents gather in one place and the soul crosses the stars, the sun and the moon,... it finds the light form of the *guru* manifested. This form is like the bodily form of the master, but it is extremely beautiful, radiant, and alluring....

Gather the soul together in the back of the eyes, and cross the sun and the moon. Then rise up, walk round the seventh *puri (sahans dal kanwal),* and pass by *Brahm* and reach *pārbrahm,* where there is the jewel of *Nām.* He who reaches there is truly detached. The light form of the master is blissful....

On seeing that form, the disciple cries out, "*Wāh guru! Wāh guru!* (Glorious master! Wonderful master!)." This form remains with the soul in all the regions and universes. It takes on the form of the *Shabd* in the region of *Brahm.* It takes the soul to the ultimate home or *sach khanḍ* (true region). When this form appears within, all doubts are destroyed, the service of the devotee is approved and half of the task of the disciple is then accomplished. Thenceforth, the devotee has to do nothing. The light form is responsible for taking the soul to the ultimate home. The saints praise this form and the bliss of contemplating on it.

Maharaj Sawan Singh, Philosophy of the Masters, PMS5 pp.270–74

The *gurus* in the line of Guru Nānak, writing in the *Ādi Granth,* have also spoken of this spiritual form:

The *guru (gur)* of the most fruitful image *(mūrat)*
has placed his hand upon my forehead:
Wherever I look, there I find him with me.

Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 535, AGK

The saints worship and adore the lotus feet of the *gurdev:*
they love the beloved Lord.

Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 394, AGK

In a long hymn of praise, Guru Arjun writes:

The *gurdev* is my mother,
the *gurdev* is my father;
The *gurdev* is my transcendent lord and master,
the *gurdev* is my companion, the destroyer of ignorance;
The *gurdev* is my relative and brother,
the *gurdev* is the giver, the teacher of the Lord's Name;
The *gurdev* is the *mantra* which never fails,
the *gurdev* is the image of peace, truth, and wisdom;

The *gurdev* is the philosopher's stone – touching it, one is transformed,
the *gurdev* is the sacred shrine of pilgrimage,
and the pool of divine ambrosia;
Bathing in the *guru'*s wisdom, one experiences the Infinite.

The *gurdev* is the Creator, and the destroyer of all sins,
the *gurdev* is the purifier of sinners.
The *gurdev* existed at the primal beginning,
throughout the ages, in each and every age.
The *gurdev* is the *mantra* of the Lord's Name:
chanting (repeating) it, one is saved.
O God, please be merciful to me, that I may be with the *gurdev;*
I am a foolish sinner, but holding onto Him, I am carried across.
The *gurdev* is the true *guru,*
the supreme Lord God, the transcendent Lord;
Nānak bows in humble reverence to the Lord, the *gurdev.*

Guru Arjun, Ādi Granth 250, AGK

See also: **guru** (7.1).

1. Tulsīdās, *Rām Charit Mānas* 1:5.3–4, *RCML* pp.3–4.

guru swarūp (H), **gurū sarūp** (Pu) *Lit.* the innate form *(swarūp)* of the master *(guru);* from the Sanskrit *svarūpa:* innate *(sva)* form *(rūpa),* own form, one's actual form; either the physical or the radiant form of a master:

The Lord has come to the world
in the form of a master *(guru swarūp),*
in order to save the souls who dwell here.

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 7:2.10, SBP p.70

The master's words beautify my heart:
day and night I remember the form of the master *(guru swarūp).*

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 4:7.2, SBP p.41

Ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadīyah, **al-**, **Ḥaqīqat Muḥammadīyah** (A), **Ḥaqīqat-i Muḥammad**, **Ḥaqīqat Muḥammadī** (P) *Lit.* the Reality *(al-Ḥaqīqat)* of Muḥammad; the true nature of Muḥammad; the archetype of Muḥammad; the inner Reality or true nature that was the real essence of Muḥammad; also called *al-Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah* (the Light of Muḥammad) and *al-Rūḥ al-Muḥammadīyah* (the Spirit of Muḥammad); equivalent terms also use

Aḥmad ('Most Praised'), a common epithet of Muḥammad. See **al-Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah**.

hātif (P) *Lit.* one who cries aloud, messenger, invisible caller, invisible speaker; a voice from heaven or from an invisible speaker; an invisible, nocturnal being whose voice may be prophetic, foretelling some future event; guardian angel, hidden guardian; sometimes used figuratively in Sufism, for the master, inner or outer, who acts as an intermediary or messenger between the soul and the Divine.

For Ḥāfiẓ, the messenger is the inner beloved, hidden from physical eyes. "Wine" and "winehouse" are metaphors for divine love and the inner sanctum where the inner master is first encountered:

> Last night, an invisible messenger *(hātif)* spoke up
> from the corner of the winehouse *(may-khānah),* saying:
> "Drink wine, for they pardon sin."
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.153, DIH p.263; cf. DHWC (333:1) p.574*

See also: **nabī** (7.1), **payk** (7.1), **rasūl** (7.1).

honji suijaku (J) *Lit.* original form *(honji)* + manifest traces *(suijaku);* a *buddha*'s manifestation of his true, fundamental form or his original nature; a term dating from the earliest introduction of Buddhism into Japan, originating in the desire to relate the *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* to the *kamis* (deities) of the traditional *Shintō* religion, in order to make Buddhism more acceptable to the followers of *Shintō.* In the event, the attempt was not well received, becoming the cause of discontent and resentment among the *Shintō* priests and intelligentsia, since it implied that the *kamis* were only manifestations and were hence inferior to the actual *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas.*

Buddhism reached Japan during the sixth century CE, and the theory of *honji suijaku* was part of the attempt to amalgamate the practices and priesthood of the two religions, later known as *shinbutsu shūgō* – the syncretism *(shūgō)* of gods *(kamis)* and *buddhas (butsus).* In places of worship, *Shintō* priests and Buddhist monks officiated alongside each other, albeit with the *Shintō* priests in a subordinate role.

According to *honji suijaku,* the *Shintō* sun goddess *Amaterasu* was a manifestation or reincarnation of the celestial *buddha* Vairochana, depicted in Buddhist texts such as the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* as the *sambhoga-kāya* of the historical Buddha. The *sambhoga-kāya* is the luminous 'bliss body' or 'subtle body of infinite form' in which *buddhas* and advanced *bodhisattvas* can appear to other beings in order to assist their spiritual development. Vairochana means 'from the sun', and the Japanese name for Vairochana is

Dainichi ('Great Sun'). Likewise, Kumano Gongen was said to be a manifestation of the *buddha* Amitābha, and Kashima Daimyojin of the eleven-faced *boddhisattva* Avalokiteshvara. Paintings and statues commonly included *bodhisattvas* and *buddhas* together with their *Shintō* counterparts. While it was never formalized, the concept of *honji suijaku* led to a pervasive blend of various aspects of *Shintō* and Buddhism, which continues today.

The Buddhist distinction between *honji* (true nature, C. *běnjì*) and *suijaku* (manifestation, C. *chuíjì*) originated in China, and was used in the *Tiāntái* (J. *Tendai*) school to differentiate the historical Buddha from his eternal and essential counterpart, and the absolute *Dharma* from its manifestations at the material level.

In reality, *honji* and *suijaku* are part of an indivisible unity, the one being no less than the other. During the eighth century, however, the *honji* were seen as superior. Slowly, the two came to be seen as one, but it may be presumed that the *Shintō* priests and followers always retained some reservations. During the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, the followers of Shintō suggested that in fact the *kami* were the *honji* and the *buddhas* were *suijaku.*

The situation must have rankled and been a constant source of disharmony. In 1868, however, when Emperor Meiji regained power for the imperial throne from the feudal lords who governed Japan under the overall the rule of the Tokugawa *shogun,* one of the first things he did was to officially abolish the notion of *honji suijaku,* giving official status instead to the movement known as *shumbutsu bunri* (separation of *kamis* and *buddhas*). The decree included the complete separation of *Shintō* and Buddhism, in beliefs, practices, and institutions. In fact, during the early period of Emperor Meiji's rule, Buddhism found itself the focus of persecution, although eventually its pursuit of tolerance prevailed.[1]

1. See "Japan," "shinbutsu-bunri," "shinbutsu-shūgō," "Shintō," *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism, ODB.*

Ḥuḍūr (A), **Ḥużūr** (P), **Huzūr** (H/Pu) *Lit.* presence; especially presence with God, but also with oneself, with the world and so on; also, a term of respectful address used for kings, highly placed personages, and holy men; also, the inner light form of the master.

The term is commonly used in India for both the outer and inner forms of the master. As Keshavdās writes:

> Blessed was the moment
> when I found the Lord God.
> I did not have far to go:
> *Huzūr* appeared in the form of light.
> *Keshavdās, Amīghūnt Rāg Mangal 2:1, KDA p.2*

Bhīkhā indicates that this form originates from the divine Name, the creative power:

> The Name *(Nām)* has shown me beautiful light:
> the Name *(Nām)* has brought me close to *Huzūr.*
> *Bhīkhā, Bānī, Guru Aur Nām Mahimā, Shabd 13:17, BSB p.22*

Sahajobāī expresses her love for her master, but makes no distinction between the inner and outer forms:

> I am madly in love,
> my mind is torn in shreds:
> I am only satisfied on seeing *Huzūr.*
> *Sahajobāī, Bānī, Prem kā Ang 2, SBB p.37*

See also: **ḥuḍūr** (▸3).

image, **image of Christ**, **image of light**, **image of the Life**, **image of the saviour** (Gk. *eikōn*) One of the commonest terms used for the inner or spiritual form of the saviour in Manichaean texts. In Coptic, the term used is the Greek *eikōn,* anglicized as 'icon' or 'ikon'. Its literal meaning is a 'representation', an 'image' or a 'likeness', which is how the light form manifests – as a likeness of the physical form. In Christianity, an icon has come to mean any pictorial representation of Jesus or any of the Christian saints, demonstrating, perhaps, that the real *eikōn* has always had its place in Christianity, but that, following the common pattern, the inner has been replaced by the outer. The term 'Image of God' is used by both by Philo Judaeus and early Christian writers for the divine Word *(Logos).*[1]

In one of the Manichaean psalms, the devotee speaks of the purity of the spiritual form – "your unsullied brightness" – begging to be released from the powers and distractions of the world and of the mind, and imploring Jesus to reveal his "beautiful image". In each stanza, the devotee depicts his situation, then begs for the spiritual form to appear to him, as the complete solution to all his travails:

> Jesus, the light of the faithful,
> I beseech you, do not forsake me.
> Your beautiful image *(eikōn),* my father,
> reveal it to me and your unsullied brightness.
> Let it arise, and quickly come to me. . . .
>
> Do not forsake me, even me your slave,
> in the presence of the sons of matter;

Do not allow any of the demons
to prevail over me as I come to you.
I see a merciless crowd of them
surrounding me like vultures:
Jesus, reveal yourself to me in the day of my need.

Sever the nets of fear and timidity,
and guard your sheep of light
from the wild destructive wolves.
Reveal your face to me,
O holy and unsullied brightness;
For you are my good shepherd,
my true and merciful physician.

I see great dread from the earth up to the skies,
woe is me therefore:
How can I escape unless you ferry me across, my Lord?…
When you appear to me (within)
I shall be healed of the disease of my sins.

You have shone forth on me, my Lord,
that I may be able to go beyond the alarm of death.…
Help me, O saviour, my God,
let me see your image *(eikōn)*.…

Make me, even me, worthy of your holy bridechambers.…
Disperse the dark cloud that is before my eyes,
that I may be able to cross, rejoicing,
to your honoured dwelling places.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCLII; cf. MPB pp.61–62

This "image" is also eternal, and has been with the soul when it was with God before creation came into being:

Let me be worthy of your bridechambers
that are full of light.…
Let me see your image *(eikōn),* my holy father,
which I saw before the world was created.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXIII; cf. MPB p.79

In another of these Coptic psalms, the "image" is counted as one of three gifts, given by the master to a disciple:

As I come to you today,
O kings of light, O helmsmen,
open your doors to me and take me in unto you.
Let me be counted worthy of my three gifts:
the image *(eikōn),* love, and the Holy Spirit.
Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXVI; cf. MPB p.83

These psalms are all pleas for release from the world, the mind and the body, for the inner door to open, and for the inner spiritual and radiant form of the divine beloved to be revealed. In another psalm, the writer speaks as if this request has been granted. Here, the spiritual form is called the "image of the saviour" and the "likeness of light":

O Firstborn, take me in to you.
Lo, the path of light has stretched before me
unto my first city (original home).…
The image *(eikōn)* of the saviour has come to me.…

O Firstborn, the gates of the heavens
have opened before me through the rays of my saviour
and his glorious likeness of light.
I have left the garment upon the earth,
the senility of diseases that was with me;
The immortal robe I have put upon me.
Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXIV; cf. MPB pp.80–81

In another psalm, the "image" is the "bringer of gladness", which the "eye of the soul" has seen:

The image *(eikōn)*…the bringer of gladness:
the joyous eye of my soul looks upon them.
Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXXX; cf. MPB p.101

In another, the saviours are described as "them of the dear image":

Lift up your face, beloved, look into my face,
see how I gaze at you with no evil look in my eyes.…
I have lived since I heard your sweet Voice,…
O glorious one;
For I have seen them of the dear image.
Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXXXIII; cf. MPB p.104

In another, the devotee expresses his love for this "image", which he had felt as a yearning even before he had attained that height:

I have passed my whole life nourished by your Truth.
I worship you, image *(eikōn)* of my master,
which I loved before I saw it;
But because of its renown, of which I had heard tell,
I kept myself holy, that I might be counted worthy of it.
Manichaean Psalm Book CCLXVII; cf. MPB p.84

In yet another, the psalmist addresses the liberated soul, who has been released from all bondage and now enjoys the "joyous image of Christ" – the "Christ" in this psalm being Mānī:

You have been released
from the grievous bonds of the flesh:
You have been justly garlanded over all your enemies.
The joyous image *(eikōn)* of Christ –
you will have your fill of it now:
Go your way, therefore, victoriously to your city of light.

You are glad because you have mixed with the holy angels:
upon you is set the seal of your glorious purity.
You are joyful because you have seen your divine brethren,
with whom you shalt dwell in the light forever.
Manichaean Psalm Book CCLIV; cf. MPB p.64

In another, the coming of a master to this world is described as the spreading of "fragrance" in the "land of the foul stink". The divine image appears within, and the souls are renewed:

An image *(eikōn)* of light was manifested
in the dwelling place of beasts;
An image *(eikōn)* of light was revealed
in the land of the foul stink. . . .
And the fragrance of balsam spread.

Souls gathered and came to see his image *(eikōn),*
they came to see his image *(eikōn),* they fell at his feet;
They became mad because of his brightness,
they arose that they might mark his likeness.
Psalms of Thomas VIII, Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.214

The same theme, of yearning to behold the pure radiance of the inner beloved, is present in the Manichaean hymns in Parthian, where an equivalent term is used for the spiritual "image" of the saviour. Here, also, 'Jesus the Splendour' or the 'Radiant Jesus' is an expression used specifically for the spiritual, ascended form of Jesus, whom the devotees hoped to meet inside:

We will stretch out our hand in prayer
and direct our (inner) eye towards that image of yours. . . .
You we praise, Jesus the Splendour, New Dispensation.
You are, even you, the righteous one,
the noble physician, the most beloved Son, the blessed Self.

Manichaean Hymns, MM1 p.312ff.; cf. GSR p.65, ML p.107

The soul has been separated since the beginning of creation, lost in the labyrinth of transmigration. Now, after meeting the saviour, the journey home has begun, and the soul longs to meet his pure and radiant, spiritual form:

Now, O gracious Father, beneficent king!
Countless ages have passed
since our separation from you. . . .
We yearn for that merciful, beautiful, immaculate,
bright image of yours.
We would behold your loving, radiant, living countenance.

Manichaean Hymns TTT2 p.173a; cf. GSR p.347

The Mandaeans, too, had similar terms for the radiant and spiritual form of the master. In one allegorical poem, the master is 'commissioned' by God, the Great Life, and told to manifest his "divine image" to the chosen souls, the "elect righteous":

Go, go, O dazzling one,
show your divine image to the elect righteous
that they may see you and shine.

Mandaean Prayer Book 366; cf. CPM p.258

The devotee, for his part, hearing the mystic Call of the "dazzling one" is caught up in longing to see him within. This deep yearning drives out sleep from the mind, even keeping the devotee awake all night, seated blissfully and lovingly in meditation. Hence, in another Mandaean poem, the writer says:

Early I arose from my sleep: I stood,
into radiance that was great I looked;
I gazed into radiance that was great,
into the light which is boundless.
Clothed in robes of radiance,
light was thrown upon my shoulders;
A wreath of ether he set upon my head,
and set it on the head of all his race.

He (the saviour) hymned, and the *'uthras* with him hymn,
and the light rays answer his Voice.
It arouses sleepers, makes them rise up from their sleep.
He said to them "Arise, O sleepers who lie there,
rise up, O stumblers who have stumbled.
Arise, worship and praise the Great Life
and praise his counterpart, that is the image of Life,
which shines forth and is expressed in sublime light."

Mandaean Prayer Book 114; cf. CPM pp.110–11

The disciple arises from his sleep to attend to his devotions and spiritual practice. With all attention withdrawn from the world, he experiences great light and radiance within himself. The master's "Voice" awakens those who sleep, not only in their beds, but in the slumberland of this world. And they are to arise not only from their nightly slumbers, but they are also called to rise up to and pass through the inner door where, "in sublime light", they can meet "his counterpart", the light form of their saviour, the "image of Life". Such writings do not represent hopes or theological precepts. They are based on actual experiences of devoted disciples. As time passes, however, they become reduced to the status of liturgy and the psalms of religion, their real meaning often forgotten.

It is an interesting fact that mystical devotees of different spiritual traditions have visions that reflect – and seem to validate – their own faith, aspirations, and personal mindset. Some devotees even have visions of undoubtedly religio-mythological characters, who cannot be said to exist anywhere but in human imagination. Yet these characters have been invested with such a spiritual aura and have become such a part of religious thought processes that they even appear in devotees' visions. It must be asked, therefore, how much of such visions is 'real', and how much is colouring added by the mind of the mystic. Teresa of Ávila, for example, saw images or visions of Jesus that seemed alive, and that actually spoke with her and revealed inner secrets or mysteries:

> When our Lord (Jesus) is pleased to bestow greater consolations upon this soul, he grants it, in whatever way he thinks best, a clear revelation of his sacred humanity, either as he was when he lived in the world, or as he was after his resurrection. And although he does this so quickly that we might liken the action to a flash of lightning, this most glorious image is so deeply engraven upon the imagination that I do not believe it can possibly disappear until it is seen where it can be enjoyed to all eternity.
>
> I speak of an 'image', but it must not be supposed that one looks at it as at a painting (*i.e.* as a representation). It is really alive, and sometimes even speaks to the soul, and shows it things both great and secret. But you must realize that, although the soul sees this for a certain

> length of time, it can no more be gazing at it all the time than it could keep gazing at the sun. So the vision passes very quickly; though this is not because its brilliance hurts the interior sight – which is the means by which all such things are seen – in the same way that the brilliance of the sun hurts the eyes. . . .
>
> The brilliance of this vision is like that of infused light or of a sun covered with some material of the transparency of a diamond, if such a thing could be woven. This raiment looks like the finest cambric. Almost invariably, the soul on which God bestows this favour remains in rapture, because its unworthiness cannot endure so terrible a sight.
>
> I say 'terrible', because – though the sight is the loveliest and most delightful imaginable, even by someone who had lived and striven to imagine it for a thousand years, because it so far exceeds all that our imagination and understanding can compass – its presence is of such exceeding majesty that it fills the soul with a great terror.
>
> It is unnecessary to ask here how, without being told, the soul knows who it is, for he reveals himself quite clearly as the Lord of heaven and earth.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Interior Castle 6:9; cf. CWTA2 p.315*

There is no doubt concerning the experience of ecstasy and inner light – something common to many mystical experiences. Nevertheless, St Teresa is very aware of the power of her own mind, and time and again, she asks herself whether such visions could be purely the work of her own imagination. She does acknowledge that her visions, since they are not seen with the physical eyes, can be categorized as "imaginative" visions. But they are not, she maintains, her own imaginative inventions:

> One year, on St Paul's day, when I was at Mass, I saw a complete representation of this most sacred humanity, just as in a picture of his resurrection body, in very great beauty and majesty. . . If there were nothing else in heaven to delight the eyes but the extreme beauty of the glorified bodies there, that alone would be the greatest bliss. Although this vision is imaginary, I never saw it or any other vision, with the eyes of the body, but only with the eyes of the soul. And no sooner had the vision faded . . . than I began to think . . . that I had imagined it. . . . But the Lord made such haste to grant me this favour and to make this reality plain that my doubt about its being fancy left me immediately, and since then it has become quite clear to me how silly I was. For, were I to spend years and years imagining how to invent anything so beautiful, I could not do it, and I do not even know how I should try; for, even in its whiteness and radiance alone, it exceeds all that we can imagine. . . .

> Of all impossibilities, the most impossible is that these true visions should be the work of the imagination. There is no way in which this could be so: by the mere beauty and whiteness of a single one of the hands that we are shown, the imagination is completely transcended. In any case, there is no other way in which it would be possible for us to see in a moment things of which we have no recollection, which we have never thought of, and which, even in a long period of time, we could not invent with our imagination, because, as I have already said, they far transcend what we can comprehend on earth.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Life 28; cf. CWTA1 pp.179–80, 183*

St Teresa also wonders whether she is seeing a representation of Christ or Christ himself:

> At certain times, it really seemed to me that it was an image I was seeing; but on many other occasions I thought it was no image, but Christ himself, such was the brightness with which he was pleased to reveal himself to me. Sometimes, because of its indistinctness, I would think the vision was an image, though it was like no earthly painting. . . . If what I see is an image, it is a living image – not a dead man, but the living Christ. And he shows me that he is both man and God – not as he was in the sepulchre, but as he was when he left it after rising from the dead. Sometimes he comes with such majesty that no one can doubt it is the Lord himself; this is especially so after communion, for we know that he is there, since the faith tells us so. . . .
>
> Almost invariably the Lord showed himself to me in his resurrection body, and it was thus, too, that I saw him in the (heavenly) host. Only occasionally, to strengthen me when I was in tribulation, did he show me his wounds, and then he would appear sometimes as he was on the cross and sometimes as in the garden (of Gethsemane). On a few occasions, I saw him wearing the crown of thorns, and sometimes he would also be carrying the cross, . . . but always in his glorified flesh.
>
> *Teresa of Ávila, Life 28–29; cf. CWTA1 pp.181–82, 188*

It seems reasonable to suppose that the essence of such experiences is real, although they are clearly coloured by the mind of the individual mystic. It is like clouds in the sky, which have no particular form, yet individuals may see images in them, according to the content of their own minds.

See also: **face**, **Image of God** (3.1), **visions** (▸3).

1. See **Image of God** (3.1).

inner form See **divine form**.

jabīn (P) *Lit.* brows, forehead; in Sufi imagery, the forehead of the beloved, which signifies the manifestation of the inner beloved and the associated mystical illumination; synonymous with *pīshānī.*

The forehead of the beloved represents the place of divine illumination and wisdom in the human form. The forehead of the seeker is where he tries to manifest the spiritual form of the beloved. It is the focus of concentration from where the soul leaves the body and begins the inner mystical journey. Saʿdī writes of the light that illuminates the beloved's forehead. This can be understood both physically and spiritually:

> Has a mirror facing the sun been placed at the door of your tent,
> or do those rays come from your forehead *(jabīn)?*
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 51:2, KSSS p.253; cf. TOS p.72*

See also: **abrū**, **pīshānī**.

jaʿdah (A), **jaʿd** (P) *Lit.* curl, ringlet; a curl or ringlet of hair; in Sufi poetic imagery, the fragrant, musk-laden curls of the beloved, symbolizing the divine grace that flows from Him; part of a family of Sufi metaphors, including tresses *(zulf)* and locks *(gīsū)* of long hair, and so on, which generally signify that which intoxicates the lover with the pain of longing.

Ḥāfiẓ speaks of the pangs of love, generated in the lover's heart by the "fragrance" of grace that comes from the divine beloved. The "dawn wind" and "fragrant breeze" are allusions to the divine creative power:

> From the fragrance of the musk sachet
> carried by the dawn wind blowing upon his forelock –
> Oh, what pain fills my heart
> from those curling musky ringlets *(jaʿd-i mushkīn).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.1, DIH p.29; cf. DHWC (1:2) p.2*

And:

> The fragrant breeze from your tresses' curls *(jaʿd)*
> keeps me continuously intoxicated.
> Moment by moment, I am demolished
> by the beguiling of your bewitching eye *(chashm-i jādū).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.41, DIH p.101; cf. DHWC (86:1) p.194*

In a twist to the metaphor, Jāmī writes that the beloved's hair, hanging down in dark chain-like ringlets *(jaʿdah),* veils the beauty of his face (the inner beloved), creating a great longing for union with him in the heart of the lover:

> By spreading dark, musky curls *(jaʿd)* upon your face,
> you have turned our bright day into a dark night.
> *Jāmī, Dīvān 79, DJRJ p.140*

In Muslim theology, it is said that God is the absolute self-existent Cause. Islamic scholars maintain that the concept of the causal 'chain' (a sequence of contingent causes) and the concept of the causal 'circle' (a circular view of causality, with A causing B, which then causes A) are both unable to explain Reality. Even logic demands a prime Cause from which all else flows. Rūmī points out that mystics care little for such intellectual considerations. Their "chain" and "circle" is the "curl" of the beloved's 'hair', meaning that their interest is in the beloved alone, and that he is beyond all intellectual speculation and discussion:

> The 'chain *(silsilah)*' of these people (the lovers)
> is the musk-dropping curls *(jaʿd-i mushkbār)* (of the beloved);
> They have the problem of 'the circle *(dawr)*',
> but it is the 'circle *(dawr)*' of the friend.
> *Rūmī Maśnavī III:3850; cf. MJR4 p.216*

See also: **gīsū** (▸4), **mū**, **ṭurrah**, **zulf**.

jānān (P) *Lit.* beloved, sweetheart; also, the plural of *jān* (life, soul); in Sufism, the divine beloved, as in *jānān-i ḥaqīqī* (true beloved); described by ʿIrāqī as the "attribute of the Self-Existent One *(al-Qayyūm),* by whose grace all things exist".[1]

Ḥāfiẓ says that the spiritual form (the "face") of the beloved can only be experienced by a pure heart:

> Only one of pure vision can behold the beloved's *(jānān)* face:
> without purity, one cannot see into that mirror.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.72, DIH p.147; cf. DHWC (127:7) p.265*

Saʿdī expresses his helplessness in the face of his love:

> What can I do? I can tolerate the loss of my heart *(dil),*
> but cannot bear the absence of the heart-ravisher *(dilbar).*

How can I act? Though I may dispense with life *(jān),*
I cannot do without my beloved *(jānān).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 206:5, KSSS p.290; cf. TOS p.281

The answer to all "problems", he says, is to relinquish obsession with the self and merge into the beloved:

O Saʿdī, give up this self-pity:
you know the remedy for your problems:
Sacrifice your life *(jān),*
and contemplate the beloved *(jānān).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 308:10, KSSS p.315; cf. TOS p.417

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.78, *RLI* p.58.

Jesus the Splendour One of the saviours of the Manichaean pantheon; distinguished from the human Jesus, who is known as Jesus the Messiah or Jesus of Nazareth, although the distinctions are often blurred; the ascended and spiritual form of Jesus; the Radiant Jesus, who – according to the Manichaean cosmogony – remains active as a saviour; the Light Messenger Jesus, a being of light sent by the Father as a saviour to Adam and to all humanity; closely linked to or identified with the *Vahman* or Great *Nous,* the divine Intelligence of God, the creative power. In Manichaean mythology, both Jesus the Splendour and the *Nous* are called forth or emanated by the Third Messenger, the primal divine agent sent to rescue souls (particles of light) in this world from the powers of darkness by bringing them *gnōsis,* true knowledge of themselves and of their divine home and origin. The Great *Nous* is regarded as the Father of all messengers, including Zarathushtra, Buddha, Jesus, and Mānī. The function or duties of "Jesus the Splendour,… who shall be sent from the Greatness" is described in the *Kephalaia:*

> He makes clear and reveals everything, both the external and the internal, both what is above and what is below. Whether it concerns the highest aeons that are hidden and unmanifest or the ships of light that are manifest. He is the one who unveils them. He is also the one who reveals their glory, and the greatness that dwells in them. And regarding this beating and wounding of the living soul, Jesus is the one who reveals it. He also preaches about (the soul) and its peace. He reveals how it is cleansed and healed.
>
> *Kephalaia 152; cf. KOT pp.159–60*

See also: **messenger** (7.1), **image**.

jñāna-sattva (S), **ye shes sems dpa'** (T) *Lit.* wisdom *(jñāna, ye shes)* being *(sattva, sems dpa');* a tantric term for the manifestation of the actual being, such as a deity or celestial *bodhisattva,* that a practitioner visualizes or imagines during their meditation. The visualized being is known as the *samaya-sattva* (S. promised being; T. *dam tshig sems dpa'*).

During the process of meditation, the practitioner visualizes or imagines the form, the *samaya-sattva,* of their chosen deity or celestial *bodhisattva.* In a concentrated mind, such images can become relatively stable, and the practitioner can perform various forms of worship *(pūjā)* before the imagined form, which can induce a deeply devotional and blissful state of mind. At a certain point, however, the actual, real or wisdom form *(jñāna-sattva)* of the heavenly being is believed to manifest before the inner vision of the practitioner, merging with or supplanting the imagined form. Whether or not this is actually a manifestation of the heavenly being or a projection of the higher mind of the practitioner, induced by the deep devotion and concentration on the imagined form, is at best uncertain, especially since the deities imagined are of a mythological nature.

The same principle applies to the inner manifestation of any deeply revered spiritual master (past or present) or celestial being, whatever the religious or spiritual tradition may be.

See also: **samaya-sattva**.

khadd (A/P) (pl. *khudūd*) *Lit.* cheek; in Sufi imagery, a general symbol for the beauty and light of the beloved, especially of the inner beloved; also appears in expressions such as moon-cheeked one *(qamarīn khadd),* and so on, implying the spiritual illumination and beauty of the beloved; used somewhat synonymously with *'āriḍ* (cheek), *rū* (face, cheek), and *rukhsār* (face, cheek).

Sufi poets often combine allusions to the beloved's radiant cheek with references to his graceful "stature *(qadd)*", commonly likened to a "cypress". His "stature", too, signifies the grace of the inner beloved. Nothing, however, really compares to the radiant beloved within:

> Beside your striding stature *(qadd),*
> the cypress walks with graceless gait;
> Beside the radiance of your cheek *(khadd),*
> the brilliance of the moon seems pale.
> *Sanā'ī, Dīvān 403, AMM p.1041; cf. in SSE1 p.108*

Sanāʾī begs the beloved to visit him in his innermost heart, not to disclose himself to all and sundry:

> You, who are endowed with such tresses,
> earlobes, cheeks *(khadd)* and figure,
> do not enter the public garden,
> for you have a garden at home.
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 159:3, KSSS p.385; cf. BOS p.174*

See also: ʿ**āriḍ**, **rū**, **rukhsār**.

khāl (A/P) *Lit.* mole, beauty spot; perceived in many cultures as a mark of allurement or great beauty, especially on a woman's face. In Persian culture, temporary, cosmetic 'moles' were made using pitch and oxide of antimony, while permanent moles were created out of charcoal and chelidonium (greater celandine), a plant whose poisonous orange sap was reputed to possess the power to remove warts.

In Sufi poetic imagery, particular aspects of physical, finite beauty are taken as symbols or reflections of the infinite Beauty. Sometimes qualified as the *khāl-i siyāh* (black mole), *khāl-i mushkīn* (musky mole) or *khāl-i Hindū* (Hindu mole), the mole thus epitomizes the focus of attraction and charm of the face of the divine beloved. In this context, the face refers particularly to the inner or spiritual form of the beloved. The metaphor is allied in meaning to terms such as cheek *(khadd),* down *(khaṭṭ),* eyebrow *(abrū),* lips *(lab)* and tresses *(zulf)* of hair, each of which similarly epitomize the beauty of the divine beloved and the focus of the lover's attention.

Sufi interpreters and systematizers have suggested a range of allied meanings for the *khāl.* According to Tahānawī, "Shaykh Jamāl says that the beauty spot *(khāl)* signifies the focal point of the human spirit."[1] Somewhat similarly, the *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq* says that the mole symbolizes the *suvaydā,* the focus of consciousness in a human being:

> The dark pinpoint *(nuqṭah-ʾi suvaydā)* of the human heart, which is the point of focus of the world of being, may also be symbolized by the beauty spot *(khāl).*
> *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq, in TAT p.193; cf. in SSE1 p.44*

A number of commentators have interpreted the black mole as an image of the indivisible divine Unity *(Vaḥdat).* It is black because no one can find a way out of that Unity, just as no one can find their way out of total darkness.[2] Lāhījī, interpreting Shabistarī's *Gulshan-i Rāz,* says that the "black mole" represents "the point of the divine Selfhood *(Huwīyat)* or the point of Oneness of Reality *(Vaḥdat-i Ḥaqīqat),* which is black because of its incognizable and incomprehensible nature."[3] Others have seen the metaphor of the mole as conveying the immanence of the macrocosm in the microcosm, of the

Divine in the perfect man. In this sense, the mole is understood as the point of indivisible Unity *(Vaḥdat)* that nevertheless contains all phenomena within itself. Taking a broader viewpoint, on the other hand, ʿIrāqī says that the black mole refers to the world of the Unseen *(ʿālam-i Ghayb)*.[4]

When meaning is uncertain, variant interpretations proliferate. But while Sufi commentators may have variously expounded the meaning, in the poetry of Ḥāfiẓ, Rūmī, Maghribī, ʿAṭṭār, Saʿdī, Sanāʾī, and others, the imagery of the mole seems to refer simply to the beauty of the divine beloved. It represents the beauty and allurement of his spiritual form or "face" within, which becomes the entire focus of the devotee's love, longing, and attention. Ultimately, of course, this 'spiritual form' is realized to be the divine Unity itself, which brings all the interpretations into harmony. Rūmī says that this "mole" is indescribable:

> O my comrade on the way, dismiss your weariness for a moment
> that I may describe a single mole *(khāl)* of that Beauty.
> The beauty of his state cannot be set forth:
> what are both the worlds but the reflection of his mole *(khāl)?*
> When I breathe a word concerning his beauteous mole *(khāl-i khūbash),*
> my speech would fain burst my body.
> Like an ant, I am so happy in this granary
> that I am dragging a burden too great for me.
>
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī II:190–93; cf. MJR2 pp.231–32*

ʿAṭṭār writes in a similar vein:

> Your beauty spot *(khāl)* itself strikes dumb
> the most articulate of orators;
> The brightness of your down *(khaṭ)* blinds
> the most keen-eyed seers.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 668:9085, DASN p.477; cf. in SSE1 p.46*

> The wheel of heaven turns about that beauty spot *(khāl),*
> like a compass needle rapt in reverie.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 314:5126, DASN p.286; cf. in SSE1 p.46*

Saʿdī wryly counsels against involvement with the divine Beauty:

> Beware of looking at that speck of a mole *(khāl)!*
> Don't move!
> For the snare *(dām)* (of a charmer's) tresses *(zulf)*
> is spread over it.
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 55:20, KSSS p.358, BOS p.62*

And Sanāʾī says that this "mole" baffles the scholars; they cannot fathom this human being who is the perfect man:

Even the wise scholars' souls, absorbed in 'states of grace',
are baffled by your beauty spot *(khāl);*
And by your curls, they are disconcerted.

Sanāʾī, Dīvān 334, AMM p.999; cf. in SSE1 p.46

Like ʿAṭṭār, Ḥāfiẓ describes that "beauty spot" as the "focal point" around which everything revolves:

Your moonlike face is the fresh and blooming spring
of all that's truly fair;
Your beauty spot *(khāl)* and down *(khaṭ),*
the focus and centre of beauty everywhere.
In your intoxicated eye *(chashm-i pur khumār),*
the spell of sorcery lies hidden;
In your restless tresses *(zulf-i bīqarār),*
the repose of beauty is revealed.

No moon has shone like you from the mansion of Goodness;
No cypress has grown with your stature from the stream of Beauty.

Through your dark beauty,
the time of heart ravishing has blossomed;
Through your grace, the season of beauty
has been blessed with abundance.

From the snare *(dām)* of your tress *(zulf),*
and the grain *(dānah)* of your mole *(khāl),*
there is no bird left in the world
that has not become the prey of Beauty.

With heart and soul, and always gracefully,
the nurse of nature cherishes and nurtures you
in the lap of Beauty.

Ever fresh is the dark (down) about your lip,
for it keeps drinking the Water of Life
from the wellspring of Beauty.

Ḥāfiẓ has renounced all desire to see your equal:
for there is no dweller in the land of Beauty but you.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.208, DIH p.338; cf. DHWC (447:1–8) p.749

The mole or beauty spot is the size of a grain. In the poetic imagery of the Sufis, the mole enhances the beauty of the radiant wheaten face of the beloved, becoming the centre of attraction for the lover. Charmed and bewitched, the bird of the soul falls into the snare or net of the beloved's beauty. Metaphorically, this mole, small, black and the size of a grain is the bait by which God lures the soul into the trap of love. Ḥāfiẓ is fond of this imagery:

> The bird of my soul, whose song once resounded
> from the top of the Lote Tree in paradise,
> fell at last, lured by the grain *(dānah)* in the snare of your mole *(khāl).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.202, DIH p.328; cf. DHWC (427:5) p.715*

Indeed, he says that this "mole" of divine Beauty was designed from the outset as a snare for men:

> The musky mole *(khāl-i mushkīn)* set on her wheaten cheek
> holds the secret of the bait of grain *(dānah)*
> that became Adam's thief.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.10, DIH p.46; cf. DHWC (24:3) p.78*

The beauty of the divine "friend" – God of the inner master – is the lure and the snare that entraps the lover:

> His tresses *(zulf)* are the snare,
> the grain of that snare, his mole *(khāl);*
> In hope of that grain *(dānah),*
> I have fallen into the snare of the friend.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.42, DIH p.98; cf. DHWC (30:3) p.86*

> Should the *sāqī* continue pouring the wine into the cup like this,
> the gnostics *('ārifān)* will be forever drinking wine.
> Should he place the grain *(dānah)* of the mole *(khāl)*
> beneath the waves of his tresses,
> many a bird of wisdom will be caught in his net.
> Happy the state of that intoxicated one
> who, at the feet of the friend *(ḥarīf),*
> knows not whether to cast off his head or his turban.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA pp.85–86, DIH p.175; cf. DHWC (153:1–3) p.305*

> By the grace of your mole *(khāl)* and downy cheek *(khaṭ),*
> you have stolen the gnostics' hearts;
> What wondrous subtleties lie concealed
> within your snare *(dām)* of the grain *(dānah)!*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.29, DIH p.79; cf. DHWC (21:2) p.73*

Lovers of the Divine are forever caught up in their longing to see the inner beloved:

> Since your Beauty called your lovers to union with yourself,
> they have fallen, heart and soul, into calamity
> from (longing to behold) your tress *(zulf)* and mole *(khāl).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DIH p.32; cf. DHWC (15:1) p.58*

ʿAṭṭār adds that that "mole" is the bait that snares the nine celestial spheres – *i.e.* the entire creation:

> Both heaven and earth seem but a glint of your sunlit visage.
> The nine celestial spheres but a sparrow,
> trapped in the snare *(dām)* of your curl,
> caught by the bait *(murgh)* of your mole *(khāl).*
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 136:3140, DASN p.172; cf. in SSE1 p.46*

1. Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT2* p.70, in *SSE1* p.44.
2. Javād Nūrbakhsh, *Sufi Symbolism, FNI1* p.39, *SSE1* p.44.
3. Lāhījī, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR* p.595, in *SSE1* p.48.
4. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.88, in *SSE1* p.47.

kharābah (A), **kharābāt** (P) *Lit.* ruins; metaphorically, tavern of ruin, tavern, winehouse, brothel, house of ill repute; from *kharāb* (deteriorated, laid waste, ruined, devastated, annihilated); a place where people would go to drink wine and get drunk; in Sufi symbolism, the inner sanctum where the lover becomes intoxicated with divine love, and the self and all human attributes are annihilated ('ruined')[1] in contemplation of the beloved, the divine cupbearer *(sāqī);* hence, the state of union with and annihilation in God, no-place, or placelessness *(lā-makān);*[2] also, with a negative connotation, one whom the wine of pride has intoxicated with forgetfulness of God.[3]

The related term *kharābātī* (of the ruins; pl. *kharābātīyān*) means a ruined soul, a man of the ruin, a haunter of the ruins, a frequenter of taverns, a tavern-haunter, a pub-crawler. Lāhījī explains that the 'ruination' of the tavern-haunter is the annihilation of the individual self:

> The tavern-haunter *(kharābātī)* is one who is freed of selfhood, and who has gambled himself away in the lane of nothingness *(nīstī).*
> *Lāhījī, Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR p.624; cf. in SSE1 p.198*

Kharābāt also appears in such expressions as *kharābāt-i fanā* (ruins of annihilation), *kharābāt-i maḥabbat* (tavern of love), *kharābāt-i arvāḥ* (tavern of the

spirits), and *pīr-i kharābāt* (master of the tavern of ruin, a spiritual master). *Kharābātī shudan* means ruination, becoming a haunter of the tavern of ruin. Maḥmūd Shabistarī expresses the mystical meaning:

> To become a haunter of the tavern of ruin *(kharābātī shudan)*
> is to be freed from self:
> For selfhood is infidelity, even if it appears as piety.
> News has come from the tavern of ruin *(kharābāt)*
> that union is giving up all but God.
> The tavern *(kharābāt)* is of the world without likeness:
> it is the place of carefree lovers.
> The tavern *(kharābāt)* is the nest of the bird of the soul:
> the tavern *(kharābāt)* is the sanctuary that has no-place *(lā-makān).*
>
> *Shabistarī, Gulshan-i Rāz 836–39, GRS p.104; cf. GRSS (839–44) p.81*

ʿAṭṭār says that on entering the *kharābāt,* the only permitted provision is *fanā'* (annihilation of the self):

> Complete loss, utter selflessness
> is the Way of the tavern of ruin *(kharābāt);*
> As for provisions on this Path,
> annihilation alone is permitted.
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 196:3784, DASN p.205; cf. in SSE1 p.192*

He also observes that, to the *karābātī,* this world and the next are both unreal:

> The frequenter of taverns *(kharābātī)*
> is beyond the bounds of heaven and earth.
> Both the worlds in this ruin are to him a dream.
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 43:2086, DASN p.120; cf. in SSE1 p.165*

Rūmī indicates that the "ruins" refers to the spiritual realms:

> What do you know of the ruins *(kharābāt)?*
> For they exist outside of the six directions.
> The ruins *(kharābāt)* are eternal,
> but you have come just now.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1854:19546, KSD4 p.141; cf. in SPL p.316*

> Since you have not left this world
> for the ruins of the spirit *(kharābāt-i jān),*
> then drink a tasteless stew instead of wine *(may)!*
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 3012:32021, KSD6 p.239, in SPL p.315*

ʿIrāqī says that entry to this spiritual tavern is not cheap. External piety is of no value here. It will cost you your life (your selfhood) to get in:

> Pawn your soul at the tavern *(kharābāt)* to buy one sip,
> but do not try to trade on piety,
> for that coin is debased.
> How long will you stand dry-lipped
> on the shore of desire *(sāhil-i tamannā)?*
> Hurl yourself – now! – into the infinite Sea,
> that the traceless Ocean may wash away all trace,
> and the shark of ecstasy swallow you in one bite.
>
> *ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 1470–72, KHI p.144; cf. DF p.56*

In an allegory, ʿIrāqī describes his attempt to enter the door of the "tavern of ruin". Despite his fervour, he is turned away on account of hypocrisy:

> Last night, I went down to the tavern of ruin *(kharābāt),* but could gain no admittance. I stood outside, clamouring and crying, but no one heard me. Of the winesellers *(bādah-firūshān)* there, either none were awake, or else, being 'no one', no one was there to open the door for me. Half the night had passed before some wild rogue *(rind),* from an archway overhead, looked down, grimacing.
>
> "Bravo, bravo," he exclaimed, "at this hour, you're quite senseless, in fact crazy. Well and fine! Please tell me, what's the matter?"
>
> "Open the door!" I demanded.
>
> "Go away!" he replied, "Don't talk nonsense. Anyway, at this time of night, whoever would open the door to the likes of you? This is no mosque, for us always to open the door for you, for you to dash in and run up to the front aisle. This is the magian temple of ruin *(kharābāt-i mughān).* Inside are living hearts, the place of the 'witness' and candle, the wine and *ghazal,* the lute and the song. Money and wit carry no weight beneath these arches; its tenants' profit is all loss, and their loss, all profit. How long will you keep pounding on this door day and night, ʿIrāqī? For all your fire, nothing is visible but smoke."
>
> *ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 2456–63, 2465, KSSS p.196; cf. in SSE1 pp.192–93*

Ultimately, it is the master who opens a way for the disciple to enter the *kharābāt:*

> I offer the highest praise to the genius and nobility
> of the one who opens the Way for me
> into the sanctum and tavern of ruin *(kharābāt).*

What utter exhilaration it is
to pace the streets of ruination *(kūy-i kharābāt),*
where, at the tavern side *(kūy-i kharābāt),*
the friend continually pledges to be with me
and to grant the ultimate vision.
He who fathoms the spirit of the tavern *(kharābāt)* to the utmost
at once renounces all he has, gives it all away.
To his eyes, the world is a wasteland –
desolate in all directions;
So readily he renounces piety's cap and gown
for tavern wine *(may).*

Sanā'ī, Dīvān, DHSG p.399; cf. in SSE1 p.199

See also: **may-kadah**, **may-khānah**, **sharāb-khānah**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.82; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.193; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT2* p.5.
2. Lāhījī, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR* p.626; Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.140.
3. Bākharzī, *Awrād al-Aḥbāb wa Fuṣūṣ al-Ādāb, AAF2* pp.249–51.

khaṭṭ (A), **khaṭ** (P) *Lit.* down; the soft fine hair on the cheeks or upper lip of a youth or woman; regarded as a mark of beauty in Persian culture; also, anything written or delineated; hence, writing, script, letter, line, margin, boundary, edge, and so on. The dual meaning of the word has been a fruitful source of puns in Persian literature. The common element in Sufi usage is that of a threshold, symbolized as down on the beloved's lip or cheek. Thus, the down on the beloved's cheek signifies the threshold of the inner sanctum, beyond which the soul meets and merges with the spiritual beloved. Lāhījī identifies the symbolic meaning as the world of spirits *('ālam i-arvāḥ)* – the antechamber to, or threshold of, the Divine.[1]

Various allied terms include *khaṭ-i sabz* (green down, verdant down, fresh down, vibrant down), *khaṭ-i naw-damīdah* or *khaṭ-i naw-khīz* (budding down), *khaṭ-i siyāh* (black down), and *khaṭ-i mushkīn* (musky down). Sufi categorizers have given specific meanings to these variants, although the actual usage of the terms often seems to justify no more than a general meaning. Thus, green down is said to signify the intermediate world *(barzakh)*[2] or eternity;[3] budding down symbolizes the Well-Guarded Tablet *(Lawḥ-i Maḥfūẓ),* the place from which the two worlds emanate;[4] and black or musky down is the eternal realm from which all else has manifested.[5] All such meanings imply something in the nature of a boundary.

To the lover of God, He is immanent in all things. Thus, Maghribī describes the world itself as the threshold of the divine beloved:

The entire world is but the ever-fresh,
budding down *(khaṭ-i damīdah)* upon your cheek.
How pleasing and attractive the down *(khaṭ)*
that flourishes and blossoms there!
Maghribī, Dīvān 72:694, DSMR p.127; cf. in SSE1 p.52

ʿAṭṭār likewise depicts the cosmos as the ever new and vibrant "verdant down" that surrounds the "Fountain of Living Water", the divine creative power:

Around the Fountain of Living Water,
buds her verdant down *(khaṭ-i damīdah).*
How sweet its taste, her down *(khaṭ)* brimming all around.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 71:2436, DASN p.137; cf. in SSE1 p.54

Nothing, he writes, is more beautiful than the divine Beauty itself:

In the book of Beauty,
no one ever looked upon a more vibrant verse *(āyat)*
than your black down *(khaṭ-i siyāh).*
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 704:9445, DASN p.497; cf. in SSE1 p.54

Ḥāfiẓ says that the threshold of the beloved is higher than paradise. When he caught a glimpse of the Divine, he went beyond paradise in his quest:

We beheld your verdant down *(sabzah-'i khaṭ),*
and from the garden of paradise
came in search of your magic grass of love.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.198, DIH p.326; cf. DHWC (433:3) p.723

Ḥāfiẓ says that once a lover is caught in the circle of love, he can never escape:

Whoever holds in his heart
a love of your fresh down *(khaṭ-i sabzat)* –
Never again will he step outside that circle,
so long as he may live.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.120, DIH p.214; cf. DHWC (195:1) p.368

For a long time has he been a captive of the beloved's love. Using traditional Sufi imagery, the beloved is portrayed as both the crescent moon and the cup of divine wine:

My love for your musky down *(khaṭ-i mushkīn)* is not just for today:
It was long ago that I became intoxicated
with that cup like the crescent moon.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.181, DIH p.305; cf. DHWC (397:2) p.676

1. Lāhījī, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR* pp.587, 552.
2. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.67, *RLRI* p.88.
3. *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.194.
4. Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-ʾi Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.140.
5. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.67, *RLRI* p.88; *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.194.

khayāl (A/P) *Lit.* thought, imagination, fancy, fantasy, image; a term used in a wide variety of contexts; in Sufi poetry, the inner vision of the divine beloved; the vision of the radiant spiritual form of the *shaykh* or master.

The term is used extensively by Rūmī in his *dīvān* concerning his master, Shams-i Tabrīz. Compared to this image, maintains Rūmī, nothing else has any reality:

Without the image *(khayāl)* of your face *(rūy),*
all realities are imaginary!
Without you, the spirit in my body is a corpse in its shroud.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1796:18872, KSD4 p.104; cf. in SPL p.266

This image brings spiritual life and consciousness, driving all other images from the mind:

When your image *(khayāl)* enters the lover's breast,
the lamps of life fill the house of his body.
Other images *(khayālʾhā)* flee before your image *(khayāl),*
like the minds of prisoners at the cry, "Freedom!"
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 473:5015–16, KSD1 p.275; cf. in SPL p.263

But to maintain the vision, the soul must escape from the body and the ego annihilated:

The beautiful image *(khayāl)* flees from me like a wild animal,
for my body is a form with hands and legs.
That formless *(bī-ṣūrat)* image *(khayāl)* makes me,
and a hundred like me,
disgusted with bodily forms and in love with annihilation.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 931:9810–11, KSD2 p.222, in SPL p.260

The radiant image of the beloved comes as and when he pleases during long hours passed in nightly meditation. The experience is indescribable. Sometimes, it seems that the beloved is playing hide and seek:

> Last night after I had waited long and was winesick,
> the beloved's image *(khayāl-i nigār)* came –
> O Lord, what was it like! O Lord!
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2067:21838, KSD4 p.269, in SPL p.324*

At other times, it seems as if he will never depart:

> Constantly is your image *(khayāl)* before my eyes –
> wonderful dream that I see in wakefulness!
> When your image *(khayāl)* caresses the heart, helpless,
> it does not fit into its skin from the joy of your lovingkindness.
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2598:27552–53, KSD5 p.291; cf. in SPL p.263*

But whatever the beloved may do, there is no higher purpose than the quest for the beloved:

> Either vision of the friend or love for him –
> to what other end should a man employ this world?
> If you want to see the friend in his image *(khayāl),*
> keep your spirit in prostration!
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 126:1445–46, KSD1 p.83, in SPL p.295*

See also: **chihrah**, **dīdār**, **khayāl** (5.1), **khayāl** (6.2), **liqā'**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭal'ah**.

khum-khānah, **khum-kadah**, **khum** (P) *Lit.* wine *(khum)* house *(khānah),* wine cellar, vat house; wine *(khum)* shop *(kadah),* tavern, winehouse; in Sufi imagery, the source of the divine wine of love; hence, the spiritual master, the inner beloved, the divine Essence; also, the spiritual heart of the lover, where the spiritual wine is discovered. Jāmī says that the soul drank from this Source in pre-eternity, before it came to this creation:

> Long before the brilliance of the soul
> fell into the darkness of the body's well,
> the Living Water coursed.
> With a hidden tongue and an unseen mouth,
> I drank the wine of love *(may-i 'ishq)*

from the winehouse *(khum-khānah)* of the eternal Essence,
in the cup of divine Names and Attributes.
Jāmī, in FNI1 p.158; cf. in SSE1 p.203

Ḥāfiẓ says that divine love sweeps aside religious piety and reason:

The water of the tavern *(kharābāt)*
swept away my cassock of austerity.
The fire of the tavern *(khum-khānah)*
consumed my reason.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.35, DIH p.85; cf. DHWC (65:6) p.159

See also: **khum** (▸4), **may-kadah**, **may-khānah**, **sharāb-khānah**.

lab (P) *Lit.* lips; in Sufi symbolism, the source of the Water or Fountain of Life, the divine creative power; the source of the divine beloved's grace; also, the inner being of the lover, who strives to permit only the pure and spiritual influence of the beloved to enter into him; often in expressions such as *lab-i shakarīn* (sugar lips), *lab-i shīrīn* (sweet lips), and *lab-i laʿl* (ruby lips), the latter often abbreviated to *laʿl.* Speaking of the masters, Saʿdī writes:

The Water of Life is in their lips *(lab):*
in my opinion they must have drunk
from the streams of the Fountain of *Kawśar.*
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 55:6, KSSS p.358; cf. BOS p.60

The Water of Life draws the soul from the body, enabling it to go through the process of dying while living. Saʿdī plays with the veiled meaning:

Although the Water of Life is in his mouth and lips *(lab),*
it would be no surprise to me if that mouth and those lips *(lab)*
were to prove the death of me.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 88:3, KSSS p.367; cf. BOS p.98

ʿAṭṭār writes in a similar vein:

Though his two eyes be murderers,
there is nothing to fear:
From his two ruby lips *(laʿl)* comes the Water of Life.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 322:5237, DASN p.282; cf. in SSE1 p.29

Ḥāfiẓ also depicts the lips of the beloved as the source of the divine Water of Life:

I kiss his lips *(lab),* and drink the wine *(may):*
I have found my way to the Water of Life.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.266, DIH p.419; cf. DHWC (562:1) p.913

Rūmī is also explicit in his use of the metaphor:

That Beauty of the heart is the lasting Beauty:
its lips *(lab)* give to drink of the Water of Life.
Truly it is both the Water, the Giver of drink, and the drunken:
all three become one when your bane (*nafs,* lower mind) is shattered.
But you cannot know that oneness by reasoning.
Rūmī, Maśnavī II:716–18; cf. MJR2 p.258

Both Saʿdī and Rūmī use the metaphor for the heart of both the seeker and the beloved. Saʿdī admits that he is still some way from union with that Water:

How far removed are Saʿdī's lips *(lab)* from your mouth!
Let this much suffice: that the praise of your lips *(lab)*
be ever on my tongue.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 114:12, KSSS p.374; cf. BOS p.126

Rūmī counsels discrimination in order to taste the sweetness of the Water of Life. The "ass", here, refers to the *nafs,* the lower nature:

Pollute not your lips *(lab)* by kissing every mouth,
and eating every food!
Then the beloved's lips *(lab)* will make them drunk,
and feed them sugar.
Then your lips *(lab)* will be freed
from the odour of the lips *(lab)* of others,
and your love will be made transcendent, pure, and one.
The lips *(lab)* that kiss the ass's arse –
how should the messiah bless them with his sugar kiss?…

Where are a pure heart and pure lips *(lab)* to receive a pure cup?
Where is an adept *ṣūfī* to run after the halva?
Display the Realities in these words of mine,
O you who pass us the wine and cup!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 96:1069–71, 80–81,
KSD1 pp.62–63; cf. in SPL pp.336–37

This mystical Water, however, cannot be discovered by reasoning:

> Science in itself cannot dissect her lips *(lab),*
> nor can her face be grasped by the intellect.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 740:9809, DASN p.517; cf. in SSE1 p.115*

Inner experience of the Water of Life is sweet beyond compare. Thus, the metaphor becomes the "sugar-lips *(lab-i shakarīn)*", the sweet lips *(lab-i shīrīn):*

> Because of your sugar-lips *(lab-i shakarīn),*
> gems and jewels fill the universe.
> O precious diamond of the soul,
> in which mine were you born?
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 703:9440, DASN p.497; cf. in SSE1 p.116*

Sometimes, the Sufi poets wrote of the "ruby lips *(lab-i laʿl)*", though the meaning remains the same. In Persian and Urdu poetry, the lover is often portrayed as languishing, stricken, enfeebled, or emaciated. Shabistarī refers to this intoxicating effect of the Water of Life from the "lips" of the beloved:

> From his eyes arise languor *(bīmārī)* and intoxication,
> from his ruby lips *(laʿl)* is manifest the Essence of being.
> Meditation on his eyes and lips *(lab)*
> made the whole world devoted to wine.
> From his eyes, all hearts languish drunken,
> by his ruby lips *(laʿl),* and all souls are clothed (in eternity).
> From his eyes, all hearts are burning,
> his ruby lips *(lab-i laʿl)* are healing to the soul. . . .
> From his eyes, our blood is forever boiling,
> from his ruby lips *(laʿl),* our soul is forever beside itself. . . .
> When you ask an embrace of his eyes and lips *(lab),*
> the eyes say, "yes," while the lips *(lab)* say "no."
> *Shabistarī, Gulshan-i Rāz 742–44, 750, 752, 756, SGR pp.568–71;*
> *cf. GRSS (745–48, 753, 755) p.73*

Likewise, ʿAṭṭār and Rūmī:

> Your ruby lips *(laʿl)* manifest in order to bring life to the soul,
> your eyes exist to ravish the heart.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 260:4482, DASN p.243; cf. in SSE1 p.28*

By the grace of your ruby lips *(lab-i laʿl),*
my heart of stone has become a gold merchant.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2117:22357, KSD4 p.298

Ḥāfiẓ is explicit in his meaning. The "Breath of Jesus", which raises souls from the death of being in the body, is again the divine power in creation:

Your ruby lips *(lab-i laʿl)* are but a symbol
for the Breath of Jesus;
Your sweet mouth *(lab)* is but a sign
for the Water of Life (*Āb-i* Khiżr).
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.238, DIH p.378; cf. DHWC (507:2) p.833

The source of this wine of divine intoxication, says Rūmī, is the "ruby lips" of the saint:

Cover your ears, swallow no other spells:
swallow nothing but the spell of the holy saint –
That spell of his, sweeter than halva,
of whose feet a hundred halvas are but the dust.
Those kingly jars full of divine wine *(may)*
have drawn their stock from the wine of his lips *(may-i lab ʾhā).*
Only that estranged soul who has never tasted
the wine of his ruby lips *(may-i lab ʾhā-yi laʿl)*
is a lover of the wine *(may)* (of human knowledge).
If a blind bird does not see the sweet water,
why would it not circle around brackish water?
Rūmī, Maśnavī V:2519–23; cf. MJR6 p.152

See also: **lab** (3.1).

light form See **divine form**.

likeness of light See **image**.

liqāʾ (A), **liqā** (P) *Lit.* visage, face, countenance; in Sufism, the manifested radiance of the divine Beauty or radiant form of the divine beloved; the inner form of the master. According to ʿIrāqī, it is "the appearance of the beloved which confirms to the lover beyond all shadow of doubt that it is him",[1] to which Tahānawī adds, "It is he who has appeared in a human form *(ba-ṣūrat-i*

ādam);"[2] or as Muḥammad al-Dārābī puts it, "*Liqā'* is said to symbolize the appearance of the grace of the beloved's being."[3]

It is longing to see this spiritual form or 'face' of the *shaykh* or master that takes hold of the lover:

> It is strange that anyone who once beheld you or listened to you
> did not yearn all his life to see your countenance *(liqā).*
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ, KSSS p.368; cf. in SSE1 p.65*

The fire of love is not for the joys of heaven, but for the sight of the inner beloved:

> The mystic's holy fury,
> the lover's quiet yearning
> is not a base desire for paradise
> but longing for your countenance *(liqā).*
> *Saʿdī, Kullīyāt, Ghazal Qadīm, KSMF (105) p.579; cf. in SSE1 p.66*

The master, inner and outer, resolves all questions, and helps all those who are lost in the illusion of this world:

> O you whose countenance *(liqā)* is the answer to every question,
> by you hard knots are loosed without discussion.
> You understand everything that is in our hearts,
> you give a helping hand to everyone
> whose foot is in the mire.
> *Rūmī, Maśnavī I:97–98; cf. MJR2 p.9*

See also: **chihrah**, **dīdār**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭalʿah**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.55, *RLRI* p.75, in *SSE1* p.65.
2. Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.99, in *SSE1* p.65.
3. Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.141, in *SSE1* p.65.

maggid (He) *Lit.* speaker, preacher; an angel; a Jewish holy man who was considered to be a supernatural channel for the divine will or voice; an inner guide or angel who appears in a vision; also, an itinerant preacher.

The diaries of Rabbi Joseph Karo of Safed, a noted sixteenth-century talmudic scholar and kabbalist, reveal that following his intense concentration and studies of the rabbinic literature (specifically the *Mishnah*), he received inner communications from a *maggid,* over a fifty- to sixty-year period. One of these angelic guides he called 'the *maggid* of the *Mishnah*', since it manifested

in conjunction with his intense study and repetition of the *Mishnah,* which he used as part of his meditations. The *maggid* would sometimes give information, and advise complicated meditation and concentration exercises.

In his *Shaʿarei Kedushah* ('Gates of Holiness'), Rabbi Ḥayyim Vital describes the *maggid* who came to Rabbi Joseph Karo. He also discusses a type of *hitbodedut* (self-isolation) meditation practised by Karo, in which the practitioner meditates upon a passage from the *Mishnah,* which is repeated like a *mantra* until he "clothe(s) himself in the soul of the sage of the *Mishnah.* If one does this correctly, that sage will actually speak through the initiate's mouth (as a *maggid*). Alternatively, he may visualize a mystical message."[1]

A *maggid,* when seen within by the rabbis, was often a past sage or scholar, or an angel from the heavenly pantheon. The rabbis recognized, however, that the *maggid* did not necessarily originate from the highest spiritual level, rather from the lower heavenly realms. Sometimes the information imparted by the *maggid* was incorrect.

Concerning the limitations of the *maggid,* compared with the *ẓaddik* or true mystic, Rabbi Mosheh of Prague (1630–1705) observes:

> His (Rabbi Isaac Luria's) level was high above any angel or *maggid.* He knew all that was on high and below, as well as what was decreed in the tribunal on high – and he could annul these decrees.... Even the *maggid* that was revealed to Rabbi Joseph Karo did not know the inner meaning of the *Zohar,* and was occasionally mistaken. This is because an angel or *maggid* is only from the universe of *yeẓirah* (realm of formation, astral world), while the soul is from the universe of *briah* (realm of creation, causal world).... The soul of a *ẓaddik,* however, can also be from the (higher) universe of *aẓilut* (realm of emanation).
>
> *Mosheh of Prague, Va-Yakhel Mosheh, VYM p.3a; in MKAK p.209*

Among the *Ḥasidim, maggid* was used as a title for a number of Hasidic rabbis. Rabbi Dov Baer, for example, was known as the Maggid of Mezherich (*c.*1704–1772). In this case, the designation meant preacher, since, prior to his becoming a disciple of the Baʿal Shem Tov, he had been a noted rabbi and preacher. However, it also may have signified 'angel' in a symbolic sense.

1. Ḥayyim Vital, *Shaʿarei Kedushah* 4:16a, in *MKAK* p.192.

māh, **mah** (P) *Lit.* moon; equivalent to the Arabic *qamar;* used in expressions such as *mah-i badr* (full moon), *mah-i ʿīd* (festival moon), and *mah-i naw* (new moon); in Persian poetry, a symbol of beauty; in Sufi symbolism, the divine beloved, often implying the radiant and beautiful inner beloved. Saʿdī thus describes the beauty of the inner beloved or master:

If my moon *(māh)* should unveil his face,
the sun would hide itself by reason of his beauty.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 7:1, KSSS p.346; cf. BOS p.8

The beauty of his moonlike face *(māh-paykar),*
seated on high, resembles the moon of heaven *(māh-i āsmān).*
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 25:3, KSSS p.351; cf. BOS p.28

And he speaks of encountering the beloved in his nightly meditation:

Last night, my soul was at peace,
for that moon-faced one *(māh-rū)* was held in my embrace.
Saʿdī, Bustān 1:353, KSSS p.85; cf. BSS p.63

Ḥāfiẓ likewise speaks of the radiance of the inner beloved:

Bring no candle to this assembly,
for tonight the moon *(māh)* of the friend's face is full.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.40, DIH p.96; cf. DHWC (34:2) p.91

Yet he complains, like many such lovers before and since, that the experience never lasts sufficiently long:

From his ruby lip, we tasted not a single drop before he departed:
Our vision had not had its fill
of his moonlike face *(rū-yi māh-paykar),* before he left.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.35, DIH p.88; cf. DHWC (100:1) p.216

Rūmī, describing the inner vision of his master Shams-i Tabrīz, speaks of the inner "sky" – the spiritual heavens, which are the master's real dwelling place. Taken on a trip through these heavens during his early morning meditation, he leaves his physical body behind, clothed in a more spiritual form. By the grace of his master, he is caught up by the "Voice" of the divine "Wisdom *(Khirad)*", crosses the inner realms ("the nine spheres of heaven"), and merges into the divine Sea:

At the hour of dawn, a moon *(māh)* appeared in the sky,
descended from the heavens and gazed upon me.
Like a hawk seizing a bird when out hunting,
that moon *(mah)* caught me up and crossed the heavens.
When I gazed at myself, I saw myself no more, for in that moon *(mah),*
my body, by grace, had become spiritualized.
When I travelled in soul, I saw naught but the moon *(māh),*
and the secret of the eternal revelation was fully disclosed.

The nine spheres of heaven were all absorbed in that moon *(māh):*
the ship of my being was entirely hidden in the Sea.
That Sea surged, and Wisdom *(Khirad)* arose again,
and cast abroad a Voice; thus it happened and so it befell....
Without the royal fortune of Shams al-Dīn of Tabrīz
no one could behold the moon *(māh)* or become the Sea.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 649:6769–74, 6777, KSD2 pp.65–66;
cf. MP1 (83:1–6, 9) pp.72–73

In another verse, he speaks of the inner door, the "window of the heart", through which the soul passes when leaving the body, to enter the heavenly realms and behold the inner master:

Enter, moon *(mah)* of heaven, for I have opened the window:
shine upon my face for just one night; press your lips on mine.
Close the door of speech and open the window of the heart:
you will not obtain a kiss from this moon *(mah),*
save by way of that window.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1888:19862–3, KSD4 p.159;
cf. MP2 (233:6–7) p.28

In other places, he simply describes the beauty and radiance of the experience:

Shams-i Tabrīz, on that dawn when you shine,
the dark night is transformed to bright day
by your moonlike face *(rūy chū māh).*
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz (1092:1108), KSD3 p.7, MP1 (138:11) p.116

That moon *(māh)* has returned,
whose like the sky saw not even in a dream;
He has brought a fire that no water can extinguish.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 310:3393, KSD1 p.188; cf. MP1 (35:1) p.33

And he begs that every devotee ("night-traveller") may have this experience:

O moon *(māh),* come forth from the sky of the heart
and turn our night to day;
So that no night-traveller may say,
"Tonight is not a night of moonshine *(shab-i mahtāb).*"
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 393:4174, KSD1 p.231; cf. MP1 (46:4) p.41

See also: **hilāl** (7.1), **qamar**.

manifestations of a master (in Daoism) See **xiàn**.

manomaya-kāya (S/Pa), **yíshēng shēn** (C), **ishoushin** (J) *Lit.* body *(kāya, shēn)* made of *(maya, shēng)* mind *(manas),* mindfulness, or intention *(yì);* mind-made body, supernaturally or magically produced body. A term most commonly encountered in early Buddhism.

Yogic texts speak of the *manomaya-kosha* (sheath made of mind, *manas*), one of the five coverings over the *ātman* (self, soul). The *manomaya-kosha* is the second of the subtle coverings, more subtle than that of *prāṇa* (subtle life energy). It consists of the mind, which is said to have the shape of a human being since it pervades the material body. In the Buddhist context, *manomaya* seems to be understood as both 'made *of* mind' and 'made *by* mind'. There is a difference between the two. A supernaturally produced physical body is 'made *by* mind', but the body in which a mystic enters the inner heavens is 'made *of* mind', since the heavens are essentially regions of the higher mind. It refers to what in other traditions are known as the subtle, astral, and causal bodies. It seems that writers, both ancient and modern, understanding things largely from a conceptual viewpoint, have a tendency to confuse the two. In the sense of 'made of mind', the *manomaya-kāya* is the conceptual prototype of the *sambhoga-kāya* (body of delight, body of bliss, body of reward), the heavenly body in which celestial *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* have their being in the myriad *buddha*-lands, pure lands, or paradises.

Because the Buddha was perceived as a great yogi with supernatural powers, it was believed that he could fly in the air and manifest a supernaturally produced body at will as a seemingly physical counterpart of himself if he wanted to appear before someone at a distance from his actual physical location.[1] The *Divyāvadāna,* a collection of Buddhist legends from the early centuries CE, tells the tale of how the Buddha once created multiple mind-made bodies that filled the sky; and it was in his *manomaya-kāya,* so Buddhist stories say, that he visited his deceased mother in *tāvatiṃsa devaloka* ('heaven of the thirty-three deities').[2]

Texts such as the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* explain, in chapters devoted to supernormal powers, that it is in a body made by mind *(manomaya)* that a *buddha* and other advanced beings are able to travel in the heavenly realms such as the world of *Brahmā.* In a description of the ten kinds of *iddhi* (supernormal power), the *Visuddhimagga* also describes a *manomaya* body as a "body inside a body", like the pith inside the sheath of a reed.[3]

The subject receives some considerable attention in the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra,* which says that a *bodhisattva's* power to move about as freely and as quickly as the mind roams in thought around the world is attained by *samādhi* – which

in a Buddhist context means mental concentration in meditation. In fact, all other supernormal powers are attained along with it:

> What is meant by the body made of mind *(manomaya-kāya)?* . . . It means the power to move about speedily and without hindrance as one wishes. Just as a person's mind moves without hindrance over mountains, walls, rivers, trees and other objects, even over many hundreds of thousands of *yojanas,* merely by thinking of things previously seen and perceived and while his mind keeps on functioning in his body without the least interruption or hindrance – so does the *manomaya-kāya,* in the attainment of the *samādhi* known as *māyopama* (*māyā*-like), acquire the ten powers *(bala),* the tenfold self-mastery *(vashitā),* and the six psychic faculties *(abhijñā),* is adorned with the (thirty-two) distinguishing marks, is born into the family of the noble Path, . . . and moves about as freely as it wishes.
>
> *Lankāvatāra Sūtra 2:81; cf. LSMT p.72, SLSS pp.209–10*

In a later chapter, the *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* identifies three stages or degrees of *manomaya-kāya,* which are experienced as a practitioner rises through the various stages of meditation. The first stage is that "obtained in the enjoyment of *samādhi*", when the vacillations of the mind come to rest, and when the practitioner "recognizes the nonexistence of the external world, which is no more than his own mind". The second stage of *manomaya-kāya* is when the practitioner has attained various levels of *samādhi* and has gained supernatural powers. He then realizes that he also has another body that resembles a dream body. It is not composed of the elements of this world, but of something akin to them, seeming to be like a human body, yet capable of travelling in the *buddha*-lands. This body has understanding of the "self-nature of the *Dharma*" – of the intrinsic Reality of the *Dharma* that is expressed in all things. The third *manomaya-kāya* is the 'body' that actually realizes perfection and is "thoroughly conversant with all the characteristics of self-realization and its bliss, which pervade the teachings of the Buddha". This is the realization enjoyed by all the *buddhas.*[4]

The stages of the subtle celestial body being described here are clearly realizations of what already exists within the practitioner. As he rises in meditation and his consciousness expands, he realizes more and more of the mind-made body that lies within himself. The stages of *manomaya-kāya* being described are not *creations* of the mind, but are *made* of mind energies, and are very much a part of what constitutes every human being.

See also: **nirmāṇa-kāya**, **supernaturally produced body**, **trikāya**.

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.77–78, *TBLD* (87) pp.104–5.

2. Retold in *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā* 14:2, *PTSDA3* pp.199–230, *DCBP* pp.117–19, *BLD3* pp.35–56.
3. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 12:25, 12:119, 136–39, *PTSV* pp.379, 402, 405–6, *PPVM* pp.374, 394–99; *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 22, *PTSP2* pp.210–11, *PDPM* pp.381–82.
4. *Lankāvatāra Sūtra* 3:136–37; *cf. LSMT* pp.118–19, *SLSS* pp.210–12.

mānushi-buddha (S) *Lit.* human *(mānushi) buddha;* the human form of a *buddha,* as opposed to a celestial *buddha,* who dwells in the heavenly *buddha*-lands, according to the *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* Buddhist traditions.

The historical Gautama Buddha, for example, is regarded as the *mānushi-buddha* of the celestial Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, himself regarded as an emanation of the celestial Buddha Amitābha, who is an emanation of the *Ādi-Buddha,* the primordial *buddha.* The *Ādi-Buddha* is the self-existent, uncreated, self-emanating, self-originating *buddha,* beyond mental concepts, without beginning or end, pre-existing everything else that exists, the foundation of all, and the primordial Essence of enlightenment.

According to *Mahāyāna* Buddhist mythology, there will be five *mānushi-buddhas* in the present world cycle, which spans a vast period of time. Of these, Gautama Buddha was the fourth, with only Maitreya yet to come. Prior to the birth in which he becomes a *buddha,* the *buddha*-to-be is a *bodhisattva* who has undergone a vast number of births in his progress towards buddhahood. Immediately prior to his taking birth, he dwells in one of the heavenly *buddha*-lands. When he takes birth he is still a *bodhisattva,* but during the course of his life, he attains enlightenment *(bodhi),* and upon his death, he enters final *nirvāṇa.* At present, therefore, Maitreya is said to be a *bodhisattva,* dwelling in the heavenly realms.

Each *mānushi-buddha* is linked with a celestial *bodhisattva* and a celestial *buddha (dhyāni buddha,* contemplation *buddha).* According to Buddhist cosmogony, there are three worlds – the world of desire (*kāmaloka,* this world), the world of forms or patterns (*rūpaloka,* the subtle celestial realms), and the formless world *(arūpaloka).* When a *buddha* takes birth in this world, the world of desire, it is believed that – through the power of his contemplation *(dhyāna)* – he manifests himself simultaneously in the world of forms in a corresponding *dhyāni buddha* form, as well as in the formless world, where he has no form. After the death of a *mānushi-buddha,* the *bodhisattva* who is associated with him and who is regarded as his emanation is charged with continuing the *buddha*'s work until the time comes around for the next *mānushi-buddha* to appear.

Although *Mahāyāna* Buddhist texts speak of a huge number of celestial *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas,* five are especially singled out for particular worship and veneration. These are the celestial counterparts to the five *mānushi-buddhas.*

See also: **Ādi-Buddha** (7.1), **Buddha** (7.1), **dhyāni buddha** (▸1), **Maitreya** (7.1), **trikāya**.

may-kadah (P) *Lit.* wine *(may)* tavern *(kadah);* winehouse, tavern; the place where the seeker meets the wineseller *(may-firūsh)* on the inner planes; the dwelling place of the inner beloved; also, the inner heart of a master who has realized God.

Ḥāfiẓ says that the only way to enter the inner sanctum and travel the path to God is to beg at the door of the beloved:

> If we have no provisions for the road to the home of the friend,
> let us seek them by begging at the tavern *(may-kadah)* door.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.176, DIH p.301; cf. DHWC (389:2) p.667*

> We have no means of entry into the fold of the friend,
> unless we haunt the door of the wineshop *(may-kadah),*
> like beggars petitioning for food.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.176, DIH p.301; cf. DHWC (389:2) p.667, in SSE1 p.204*

Ḥāfiẓ says that at his time of death, he wants to be totally absorbed into the sphere of divine love:

> Do not permit that on the day of my death,
> they should consign me to the earth.
> Take me to the winehouse *(may-kadah)*
> and throw me into a wine vat *(khum-i sharāb)!*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.135, DIH p.238; cf. DHWC (309:7) p.535*

Seekers of the Divine are drawn to Him, he says, like pilgrims to Mecca:

> On the road to the winehouse *(may-kadah),*
> lovers travel with the same fervour
> as pilgrims on the road to Ḥijāz (*i.e.* to Mecca).
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.134, DIH p.236; cf. DHWC (301:1) p.524*

ʿIrāqī says that the only way to eliminate the ego completely is to enter this inner sanctum. But the only price acceptable in the "wineshop" of the beloved is annihilation of the ego:

> Since I am not yet released from the grip of selfhood,
> taking a trip to the wineshop *(may-kadah)*
> is the best rite of obedience.
> *ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 1603, KHI p.151; cf. in SSE1 p.204*

Though it seems unlikely that poets such as Ḥāfiẓ had such distinctions in mind, some of the Sufi systematizers have maintained that the tavern *(may-khānah)* implies *ʿālam-i lāhūt* (the divine world, eternity),[1] while the wineshop *(may-kadah)* implies the lower realm, *ʿālam-i jabarūt* (world of divine power).[2]

See also: **kharābah**, **khum-khānah**, **may** (▸4), **may-khānah**, **sharāb-khānah**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.60, *RLRI* p.81, in *SSE1* p.200.
2. *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.231, in *SSE1* p.204.

may-khānah (P) *Lit.* house *(khānah)* of wine *(may);* winehouse, tavern; the inner sanctum where the soul meets and unites with the spiritual master; the inner heart of a master who has realized God.

The term is much used by Ḥāfiẓ. Coming to this inner sanctum, he writes, is the aspiration of those seeking spiritual union with the beloved:

> To approach the tavern *(may-khānah)* door
> is the work of those whose colour is union.
> Sellers of self have no admission
> to the street of the winesellers *(may-firūshān).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.33, DIH p.81; cf. DHWC (28:9) p.84*

This approach entails an opening of the inner eye:

> Come, let us seek an opening of the heart
> by the tavern *(may-khānah)* door.
> Kneeling before the threshold of the friend,
> let us seek our purpose.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.176, DIH p.301; cf. DHWC (389:1) p.667*

The devotee stays at this inner threshold awaiting the vision of the beloved, whenever it may be granted. There is no other place to go:

> In case a drop should perchance fall from the beloved's lip,
> I have dwelt for years at the door of the winehouse *(may-khānah).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.192, DIH p.318; cf. DHWC (417:3) p.704*

But all attachments have to be relinquished before admission is possible:

> It is improper to gather goods and chattels
> at the tavern *(may-khānah)* door:

The chattels of he who drinks this water (wine)
are cast into the sea.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.154, DIH p.264; cf. DHWC (334:8) p.575

Once admitted to the tavern, the beloved, the master, is able to forgive sins:

Last night, from the corner of the tavern *(may-khānah),*
an invisible messenger spoke:
"Drink wine *(may),* for sin is pardoned."
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.153, DIH p.263; cf. DHWC (333:1) p.574

It is only through this mystic tavern that the soul can journey on to the divine home, reached by listening to the divine Music:

If I travel from this staging post to my native home,
on reaching there, I will be wise and knowing.
If, through this journey, I return in safety to my native home,
I vow that I will go by way of the tavern *(may-khānah).*

To relate what has been revealed to me
in all this travelling and journeying –
I will go to the tavern *(may-kadah)* door,
with harp and wine cup *(paymānah).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.193, DIH p.320; cf. DHWC (422:1–3) p.710

Though it seems unlikely that poets such as Ḥāfiẓ had such distinctions in mind, some Sufi systematizers have maintained that the tavern *(may-khānah)* implies *ʿālam-i lāhūt* (the divine world, eternity),[1] while the wineshop *(may-kadah)* implies the lower realm, *ʿālam-i jabarūt* (world of divine power).[2]

See also: **kharābah**, **may** (▸4), **may-kadah**, **sharāb-khānah**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLI* p.60, *RLRI* 81, in *SSE1* p.201.
2. *Mirʾāt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.231, in *SSE1* p.204.

mèngjiàn, **mèngyóu**, **mèngzhōng** (C) *Lit.* to see *(jiàn)* in *(zhōng)* a dream *(mèng);* sleep walking *(mèngyóu)* – figuratively, dream *(mèng)* voyage *(yóu)* – used in some Daoist writings with the meaning of 'in a dream state'.

Many instances are related, especially in early *nèidān* (inner alchemical) writings and scriptures of the *Quánzhēn* school of Daoism, in which a living or deceased master uses his spiritual power to enter a person's dream *(rùmèng).*

In one such story, twelfth-century Daoist master Tán Chǔduān, while living, pays a dream visit to a rural farmer:

> In 1176, Tán Chǔduān went up to Luòzhōu. Living by the Báijiā Rapids was a farmer with an illness that he had been treating (by himself) for months without any good results. (One night), he dreamed *(mèng)* of a Daoist monk giving him some red-coloured medicine, which he then swallowed. When he woke up, the illness was cured.
>
> The next day, the farmer saw the master *(shī)* and exclaimed, "This is the monk who gave me medicine in my dream *(mèngzhōng)!*"
>
> The farmer wanted to thank him, but the master *(shī)* paid no attention to him.
>
> *Liú Zhìxuán and Xiè Xīchán, Jīnlián xiàngzhuàn 28a–b; cf. TPEQ p.232 (n.30)*

According to the writings of twelfth-century Daoist master Mǎ Yù (*aka.* Dānyáng), Daoist master Hé Déjǐn, who had died in 1170, once appeared to him suddenly in a dream – a year after Hé Déjǐn's death. In the dream, Hé Déjǐn presents Mǎ Yù with a poetry book illustrated with a fishing scene, and cautions him not to "lose sight" of the spiritual, and to avoid any pride in his insight into what is mysterious.[1]

In the same text, Mǎ Yù describes an occasion on which the same deceased master (Hé Déjǐn) appeared to a layperson in a dream. Here, "ascending to the mists (*xiá,* red clouds)" refers to the master's death:

> (The following incident occurred) after Master-Uncle *(Shīshū)* Sir Hé had ascended *(shēng)* to the mists.
>
> In Líntóng County there was a certain embroidered-silk merchant named Sir Zhāng, who had long been ailing *(huàn)* from an illness that could not be cured. Suddenly, one evening, he saw the Master-Uncle *(Shīshū)* in a dream *(mèngjiàn).* (The Master-Uncle) told him what were the proper medicines *(yào)* and treatments *(zhì)* for his illness. When (Sir Zhāng) asked him his name *(xìngshì),* he replied that he was Mr Hé of Zhōngnán.
>
> After he woke up, (Sir Zhāng) followed the prescription (given to him by Hé Déjǐn), and the illness was cured as a matter of course.
>
> *Mǎ Yù, Dānyáng shénguāng càn 13a–b; cf. TPEQ pp.124–25*

See also: **xiàn**.

1. *Cf.* Mǎ Yù, *Dānyáng shénguāng càn* 2b, *TPEQ* p.124.

mizhah, **muzhah** (P) (pl. *mizhagān, mizhahʾhā, muzhagān*) *Lit.* eyelash, eyelashes; in Sufi poetry, the glances or arrows of love coming (internally or externally) from the beloved, piercing the heart of the lover with the pain of love; hence, *tīr-i mizhah* (arrows of the eyelashes); part of a family of such metaphors, that includes *abrū* (eyebrow), *ghamzah* (glance), *kirishmah* (loving glance), and others; also, drawing on the meaning of *mizhah* as 'dark clouds', implying something (such as negligence or inattention) that clouds or veils the spiritual perception of the wayfarer.[1]

The term is used consistently for the looks of grace that can flash from the beloved to the disciple, inwardly or outwardly. Saʿdī says that no one can escape such supercharged glances:

> You have made bows and arrows *(tīr-u kamān)*
> of your eyebrows *(abruvān)* and eyelashes *(mizhahʾhā),*
> so that no prey might escape the snare of your tresses *(zulf).*
> But in the whole universe, there is no heart left as prey
> for you to hunt with your bows and arrows *(tīr-u kamān).*
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 139:5–6, KSSS p.379; cf. BOS p.152*

Even the hardest of hearts can be pierced:

> You pierce the armour of the soul
> with the point of the arrow of your eyelashes *(mizhah);*
> And I do not see myself as thin-skinned:
> it is you who are such a skilful archer.
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 407:5, KSSS p.338; cf. TOS p.543*

Ḥāfiẓ says that the beloved's looks of grace have filled his heart with the pain of love's yearning, yet still he longs for more:

> Though the darts of your eyelashes *(nāvak-i mizhagān)*
> turned my heart to blood –
> Yet I longed for the arches of your eyebrows.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.77, DIH p.152; cf. DHWC (173:2) p.333*

His glances destroy the ego, and raise the soul from the body:

> Let fly the arrows of your eyelashes *(tīr-i mizhagān):*
> who takes the slightest revenge against such a murderer?
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.265, DIH p.418; cf. DHWC (560:10) p.911*

Ḥāfiẓ also uses the term to express humility. He bows his forehead, inwardly, before the beloved:

Should the young magian wineseller reveal his glory,
I would use my eyelashes *(mizhagān)*
to sweep dust at the door of his tavern.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.5, DIH p.35; cf. DHWC (7:3) p.36

And:

For the sake of ecstasy, I long to sweep the dust
of the Way with the tips of my eyelashes *(mizhah).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.22, DIH p.65; cf. DHWC (81:6) p.187

See also: **abrū**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.80; Tabrīzī, *Rashf al-Alḥāẓ* 93, *RKA* p.57; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.459.

mū, **mūy** (P) *Lit.* hair; in Sufi poetic imagery, the hair of the divine beloved, symbolized as a beautiful woman. The beloved's hair is used metaphorically in a variety of ways. It may simply symbolize his beauty; its fragrance may point to the spiritual atmosphere that surrounds him; sometimes, his disordered tresses cause a bewilderment of bliss in the being of the lover; the disordered hair of the lover may also signify being distracted by the world; a hair or a hair's breadth can also indicate a tiny amount of something, such as a hint of the beloved's grace and love, or a trace of selfhood remaining in the lover, and so on. Sometimes, the lover may say that his love for the beloved is so complete that it has permeated every hair of his body. More frequently, specific imagery is associated with the curls *(jaʿdah),* ringlets *(gīsū),* or tresses *(zulf)* of the beloved's hair.

In a play on words, Saʿdī says that he is so powerfully attracted by the beloved that his consciousness has risen above this world and the next. The beloved's "hair" and "fragrance" symbolize his grace and favour, or his divine beauty:

I am so enamoured of your hair *(mūy),*
and so intoxicated by your fragrance *(būy),*
that I have lost all consciousness of the here and hereafter.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 59:1, KSSS p.256; cf. TOS p.83

In another wordplay, he says that the lover who longs to see the inner spiritual form of the beloved "must undergo much *parīshānī*". Here, *parīshānī* means both dishevelment of the hair, symbolizing the beauty of the beloved, and also dishevelment of the mind, as in pain and misery. Saʿdī is speaking of the pain of longing in separation from the beauty of the beloved's inner form:

He whose mind longs for the beloved's face
must undergo much disorder *(parīshānī),*
like the friend's hair *(mūy).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 82:4, KSSS p.261; cf. TOS p.117

Using a similar wordplay, he admits:

Never before was I so disordered in appearance,
or so dishevelled *(āshuftah)* of hair *(mūy)*
Now my wits are as scattered *(āshuftah)* as my hair *(mūy),*
all on account of your face.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 283:2, KSSS p.309; cf. TOS p.384

Saʿdī also says that whoever has not been snared by the beauty of the beloved knows nothing of true divine love:

The coils *(silsilah)* of the beloved's hair *(mū-yi dūst)*
are the noose *(ḥalqah)* of calamity's snare:
Whoever has not been caught by this noose *(ḥalqah)*
is indifferent to the business (of love).
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 38:1, KSSS p.354; cf. BOS p.42

The beauty of the beloved, he says, is self-evident:

Should I utter no word in praise of your face and hair *(mūy),*
your mirror would secretly declare that you are peerless.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 411:4, KSSS p.339; cf. TOS p.548

And Saʿdī admits that every fibre of his being is in love with the beloved:

Examine me just a little *(sar-i mū),* and you will find
not a single hair *(mūy)* of my body that does not praise you.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 89:6, KSSS p.263; cf. TOS pp.125–26

Rūmī says the same:

Love has transformed every one of my hairs *(mū)*
into a verse and a *ghazal!*
Your ecstasy has made every part of me a vat of honey!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2329:24655, KSD5 p.128; cf. in SPL p.271

Ḥāfiẓ says that the spiritual form of the beloved ("the face") is always with him. The subtle spiritual power of the Word is his permanent awakener:

Wherever we go, the image of your face
is our companion on the Way.
The fragrance of your hair *(mū)*
is the constant awakener of our soul.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.25, DIH p.69; cf. DHWC (97:1) p.213

See also: **gīsū** (▸4), **jaʿdah**, **ṭurrah**, **zulf**.

nija-rūpa, **nija-svarūpa** (S), **nij rūp**, **nij swarūp**, **apnā rūp** (H/Pu) *Lit.* one's own *(nija, sva, apnā)* form *(rūp);* personal, individual, particular, private form; actual, essential, true, inner, innate, inherent form; mystically, the real form of a master and of the soul; hence, the spiritual or *Shabd* (Word) form of a master; the 'form' of the pure soul beyond the realms of the mind; also, the actual inner form of a deity, as opposed to an external idol or effigy of it. Swami Shiv Dayal Singh is fond of the expression. Sometimes, the expression refers to the spiritual form of the master, sometimes to God Himself:

Within all, You remain hidden from all.
O brother, He is not far away;
But without the grace of the perfect master,
He does not reveal His true form *(nij rūp).*
Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 33:21.5–6, SBP p.278

The term appears in a poignant pair of poems of Swami Shiv Dayal Singh. In the first, the disciple expresses his love for the human form of the master, the *sarguṇ rūp* (form with attributes), but asks to be shown the master's real form:

Reveal your own real form *(apnā rūp)* to me, master.
You have assumed this physical form *(sarguṇ rūp)*
to lead souls to their salvation.
Show me now your other form *(rūp)*
that is inaccessible and boundless.
Let me see that form *(rūp)* and be absorbed in it,
and grant me the gift of fearlessness.

This form *(rūp)* is also very dear to me,
but let me experience that one through this one –
the hidden through the manifest.
Without the help of this form *(rūp)* nothing can be accomplished,
(for without its help), how can you possibly reveal the other?
This one is therefore to be greatly valued,
but show me now the other, too –
while you take on the physical to awaken souls.

I have learned this secret from your many explanations
of the path of *surat Shabd.*

Let my soul now merge in your *Shabd* form *(Shabd rūp),*
which is truly your own form *(rūp).*
I live in constant fear of death and adversity –
deliver me from this and make me fearless.
Merciful *Rādhā Swāmī,* benefactor of souls,
help me realize the purpose of life.

Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 33:15.1–11,
SBP pp.274–75; cf. SBPS pp.328–29

In the second poem, the master replies with great compassion, acknowledging the disciple's longing and explaining that the master has everything in hand. Only patience is required. All the disciple has to do is sit in meditation, and the rest will happen of its own accord. Here, *trikuṭī* and *sunn* are stages on the soul's inner ascent, while *alakh* (imperceptible) and *agam* (inaccessible) are phases of the Godhead, culminating in *Rādhā Swāmī,* which is a name for the Supreme:

Listen, dear soul; let me explain:
unique and wondrous is my (real) form *(rūp),*
which no one can perceive until I lend a hand.
Practise meditation and subdue your mind,
by holding your sense impulses in check.
Raise your soul – rise up through the sky of *trikuṭī*
and go beyond the top of *sunn;*
I will show you my form *(rūp)* as *sat Purush* (true Lord),
and then as the Lord of *alakh* and *agam.*
Beyond them is the stage of *Rādhā Swāmī,*
where I am manifest in my own true form *(nij rūp).*

Have patience, keep the company of the saints *(satsangat),*
and I shall purify you through my grace.
I shall not rest till I show you that form *(rūp)* –
why are you in such a hurry?

I carry your burdens in my own heart
so that you may be free of worries,
and nurture my love in your heart.
Give up your misgivings, be steadfast in your love –
a love tempered with faith.
I shall myself help you put in the effort,
I shall myself take you to your ultimate home.

> Listen to what *Rādhā Swāmī* has to say:
> all will be worked out as and when the supreme will ordains it.
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 33:16.1–12,*
> *SBP p.275, SBPS pp.328–31*

The ninth-century Vedantist and mystically minded philosopher Shankara uses the expression *nija-rūpa* to refer to the real self – the eternal soul, which is a part of the divine Absolute:

> Discarding the body, the *buddhi* (intellect) and the reflection of *chit* (consciousness) in it, and realizing that the Witness, the Self, the Knowledge Absolute, the cause of the manifestation of everything, which is hidden in the recesses of the *buddhi,* is distinct from the gross and subtle, is eternal, omnipresent, all-pervading and extremely subtle, and which has neither interior nor exterior and is identical with one's self – fully realizing this true nature of oneself *(nija-rūpa),* one becomes free from sin, taint, death, and grief, and becomes the embodiment of bliss. Illumined himself, he is afraid of none. For as a seeker after liberation, there is no other way to break the bonds of transmigration than the realization of the truth of one's Self.
> *Shankara,Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 220–22; cf. VCSM p.86*

> It is a foolish man who identifies himself with a mass of skin, flesh, fat, bones, and filth; a man of discrimination knows his own self *(nija-svarūpa),* the only Reality that there is, and something other than the body.
> *Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 159; cf. VCSM pp.60–61*

See also: **ashṭ-dal kamal**.

nirmāṇa-kāya (S), **nimmāṇa-kāya** (Pa), **sprul sku** (T), **huàshēn** (C), **ōjin**, **keshin** (J) *Lit.* created *(nirmāṇa, sprul)* body *(kāya, sku);* transformation *(huà)* body *(shēn),* emanated body, manifested body; response body *(ōjin);* depending on the context, either the human, physical body of a *buddha,* understood as a manifestation of the real *dharmakāya* (Truth body), or a supernaturally produced body. The Japanese *keshin* also means a personification, an incarnation, or an *avatāra* (S).

In *yoga,* tantrism and early Buddhism, the *nirmāṇa-kāya* is a magically or supernaturally produced body. The concept of such a body is present in the *Mahābhārata:* "O bull of Bharata, having obtained power *(bala),* the (follower of) *yoga* should fashion for himself many thousands (of bodies), and he should roam the earth with all of them."[1] Since the Buddha was perceived

as a great yogi with supernatural powers, it was understood that he could fly in the air and manifest supernaturally produced bodies or seemingly physical counterparts of himself at will, if he wanted to appear before someone at a distance from his actual physical location.[2]

In the *Mahāyāna trikāya* (having three bodies) doctrine, the *nirmāṇakāya* is generally the human form of a *buddha,* existing in material time and space in the same way as any other human being. Out of his deep compassion *(mahākaruṇa)* and love for the suffering of beings in the material realm, a *buddha* takes birth in the normal human manner, manifesting himself as a human being in a human body, such as Gautama Buddha, the historical Buddha. Nonetheless, the essential, inner Reality even of a humanly incarnated *buddha* always remains that of the *dharmakāya* (Truth body, essential Reality). But since this is beyond the comprehension of ordinary human beings, and because it would only frighten and alarm them were he to manifest himself in his real glory, he disguises himself in a regular human form and comes to their level, where he interacts with them in the normal human manner.

In reality, both the supernaturally produced bodies and the actual body are manifestations of the real inner *buddha* – the *dharmakāya.* This is reflected in the many diverse opinions and descriptions of the three bodies and their relationships that are found in Buddhist texts and commentaries, as the human intellect attempts to grapple with something that is essentially beyond its grasp.

See also: **supernaturally produced body**, **trikāya**.

1. *Mahābhārata* 12:289.26, in *EDYF* p.238. Though *EDYF* is normally reliable, it has not been possible to locate this passage at the reference provided or elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata.*
2. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.77–78, *TBLD* (87) pp.104–5.

Nūr Aḥmad (A), **Nūr-i Aḥmad** (P) *Lit.* Light *(Nūr)* of Aḥmad ('Most Praised'), Aḥmad being an epithet of Muḥammad. Rūmī speaks of the "Light of Aḥmad *(Nūr-i Aḥmad)*" aiding, befriending and protecting those who take refuge in the "Name of Aḥmad *(Nām-i Aḥmad)*".[1] See **al-Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah**.

1. Rūmī, *Maśnavī* I:732–38; *cf. MJR2* p.42.

Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah, **al-** (A), **Nūr-i Muḥammad** (P) *Lit.* the Light *(al-Nūr)* of Muḥammad; the true nature of Muḥammad; the archetype of Muḥammad;

the inner light, or true nature that was the real essence of Muḥammad; also called *al-Ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadīyah* (Reality of Muḥammad) and *al-Rūḥ al-Muḥammadīyah* (Spirit of Muḥammad); equivalent terms also use Aḥmad ('Most Praised'), an epithet of Muḥammad; other variations of the term include *Nūr-i Muḥammadī* and *Nūr Muḥammad.*

The Light of Muḥammad is equated by many Sufi commentators with the First Entification *(al-Ta'ayyun al-Awwal)* or individuation of the divine Essence. It is thus identified with *al-'Aql al-Awwal* (Primal Intelligence), *al-Ism al-A'ẓam* (Supreme Name), and *al-Durrat al-Bayḍā'* (White Pearl), which are all metaphors for the one, simple, original 'substance' from which all created things are manifested. In this sense, the Light of Muḥammad refers to the primal, divine creative power or emanation. 'Entification' is a scholarly term coined to mean the creation of an 'entity', of some 'thing', in the divine outflowing that becomes creation. Al-Qāshānī defines the Light of Muḥammad as

> the Essence *(al-Dhāt)* in its First Entification, for it contains all the Beautiful Names and is itself the Greatest Name *(al-Ism al-A'ẓam).*
>
> *Al-Qāshānī, Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfīyah 124, GSTA p.37; cf. GST p.27*

Some commentators refine the definition by explaining that the First Entification is divided into three levels of oneness *(aḥadīyah, waḥdah,* and *waḥdānīyah* or *wāḥidīyah),* from the 'lowest' of which the creative power is then emanated. In this definition, the Light or Reality of Muḥammad is equated with *waḥdah.*

The Light or Reality of Muḥammad is also the same as the perfect man in its cosmic or universal sense, and each individual perfect man in this world is a manifestation of the Light of Muḥammad. Thus, in Sufi thought, all prophets have been complete or partial manifestations of the Light of Muḥammad, with the Prophet Muḥammad himself being regarded as the last such prophet:

> All the lights of the prophets proceeded from his Light;
> He was before all, his name the first in the book of fate;
> He was known before all things, all beings,
> and will endure after the end of all.
> By his guidance have all eyes attained to sight. . . .
> All knowledge is merely a drop,
> all wisdom merely a handful from his stream,
> all time merely an hour from his life.
>
> *Al-Ḥallāj, Kitāb al-Ṭawāsīn, KTMH pp.11–13, in MDI p.70*

The Light of Muḥammad is the Light by which God has created the entire creation, the Light that contains the Supreme Name (and thus all the other divine Names and Attributes underlying the creation). It is the cosmic perfect

man in humanly manifested form, the ultimate expression of human perfection in whom all aspects of existence are present as the perfect microcosm of creation; and it is the source from which all prophets and saints derive their knowledge. It is thus the bridge between God and the creation, bringing divine knowledge and help to the creation.

It is also the primal source of the soul:

> The origin of the soul is the absolute Light, nothing else; that means it was the Light of Muḥammad *(Nūr-i Muḥammad),* nothing else.
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Muṣībat-Nāmah, MNFA p.358, in MDI p.215*

The concept of the Light of Muḥammad first originated during the ninth and tenth centuries, with such proponents as al-Tustarī. The notion was subsequently developed and expanded by various Sufi commentators, becoming the subject of many learned treatises. The idea developed around a number of *ḥadīth* (sayings traditionally attributed to Muḥammad), current among Sufis. According to one, Muḥammad said, "The first thing God created was my Light,"[1] or in a similar variant, "God took a handful of light and commanded it to be Muḥammad,"[2] or likewise:

> The Prophet said, "First, God created my Light, saying, 'I have created the Light of Muḥammad *(Nūr Muḥammad)* from the light of My face. Then I created whatever else I have created from the Light of Muḥammad *(Nūr Muḥammad).*'"
>
> *Shāh Niʿmat Allāh Valī, Rasāʾil, RNV2 p.442, in SSE6 p.49*

This Light, created prior to the rest of creation, was thus understood as the first emanation from the divine primordial Light, and the source of all further creation. According to another *ḥadīth,* Muḥammad said: "I was a prophet when Adam was still between water and clay,"[3] that is, Muḥammad existed prior to the creation of man. In another *ḥadīth,* God said to Muḥammad: "Were it not for you, I would not have created the heavens."[4]

Among the early developers of the idea was Ibn al-Fāriḍ (1181–1235), in whose well-known *Naẓm al-Sulūk* ('Poem of the Sufi Way'), he indicates that union with God is achieved through union with *al-Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah.* The 'I' that speaks in this extensive poem is – by poetic licence – the creative power. It is, says Ibn al-Fāriḍ, the path taught by prophets of the past to their followers; nothing exists or has its being without this Power; this Power is the path to divine union, and contrary to "nature's dark side":

> The prophets and their followers in faith
> are on my path, never leaving the track of my way.

Those who called to me before,
my Right Hand holds their happiness;
My left offers comfort to those coming after.

So do not reckon the Command *(al-Amr)* as outside of me:
no one ever attained dominion save by serving me.
If not for me, existence and witness would not exist,
and covenants of protection would have gone unpledged.

No one lives unless his life is from mine;
obedient to my will is every aspiring soul.
No one speaks unless his speech is from mine;
No one sees but by the gaze of my eye.
No one listens unless listening by my ear;
No one grasps but by my might and strength.
No one is speaking, seeing, hearing in all of creation,
but me!

In the composite world,
I appeared deep within every shape and form,
adorning them with beauty.
While in every subtle sense not revealed by my visible guise,
I was conceived and formed, but without a body's shape.
Yet in what the spirit sees clairvoyantly,
I was rarefied, concealed from this subtle sense confined. . . .

If you belong to me, rush to my union
and erase the difference of my division;
Do not tend toward nature's dark side.

Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Naẓm al-Sulūk 635–45, 650, DFQM pp.106–7;
cf. in SVSL pp.254–61

ʿInāyat Khān, who generally expresses things in a simple manner, from a human perspective, says that this "Light *(Nūr)*" is like a torch lit in the darkness: a person is guided by it, and can see where he is going. He says that "this Light is the real Muḥammad":

> Ḥażrat ʿAlī says, "The secret of God can be studied in His nature." Every traveller on foot as a rule lights his torch at the approach of night. So also this heavenly traveller. Seeing darkness overwhelming him in the lower spheres on his path, he lights a torch. It is the light of this torch, which is called in the *Qur'ān, Nūr-i Muḥammadī,*[5] that

> has guided him to the surface, whence he could clearly discern and find his path back. To the knower's eye, this *Nūr,* this Light, is the real Muḥammad. This Light it is which has beamed forth through all the masters of humanity, and is known as the Light of Guidance.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK1 p.27*

Referring to the *Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah* as the "Spirit of Guidance", he stresses its universality. It is the same Light that guides all the prophets, and is the Light of all religions:

> In reality, the Spirit of Guidance may be pictured as one thread; and all the great masters of humanity are like the beads on that thread. One spirit and many individualities, one soul and many personalities, one wisdom and many teachers who have expounded wisdom according to their own personality.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK9 p.142*

Because the *Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah* is the same one Light that serves as the Spirit of Guidance to all religions, he says that all religions, though differing externally, are essentially the same:

> But if we look at religion as one and the same religion in all the ages, given by different masters of humanity, yet inspired by one and the same Spirit of Guidance, one and the same Light of Wisdom, we see that they have all given the same truth. It is only when it is interpreted to suit people of different ages, periods and races that it varies. In this way it differs. But the underlying truth of all religions is one and the same, and whenever a preacher teaches that perfection is not for man, he corrupts the teaching that is given in all the religions; he has not understood it.
>
> *ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK6 p.183*

Further stressing the universal nature of this "Spirit of Guidance", ʿInāyat Khān says that this same Light is within everyone. When a person turns from the disappointing and transient outward life and begins to look within, he finds this Light, which serves as his "Spirit of Guidance":

> Man is created in such a way that he first looks outward; and then, when he is disappointed, when he cannot find all he wants in the outer life, he turns within. He wants to see if he can find it in the inner life, and thus he becomes connected with the spirit of inspiration, which is the Spirit of Guidance. And he who has once found the Spirit of Guidance will always be able to find it again if he keeps close to it; but

when he goes astray, when the way of his life takes another direction,
then he wanders away from the Spirit of Guidance.

ʿInāyat Khān, Sufi Message, SMIK6 p.149

Rūmī's viewpoint is much the same, quoting a *ḥadīth* to this effect:

The Prophet said, "Among my people are some
who are one with me in nature and aspiration:
Their spirits behold me by the same Light *(Nūr)*
by which I am beholding them."

Rūmī, Maśnavī I:3462–63, MJR2 p.188

Rūmī also describes the perfect saints as Muḥammad's spiritual "progeny", born of the Prophet's "soul and heart" devoid of bodily substance:

Those fortunate caliph-born sons of his
are born of the substance of his soul and heart.
Whether they be of Baghdad or Harāt or Rayy,
they are his progeny without admixture of water and earth.

Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:176–77, MJR6 p.267

Alluding to the Prophet's miraculous (though metaphorical) splitting of the moon,[6] and to seeing the inner light and ascending to the spiritual realms with the help of the Light of Muḥammad, Rūmī also relates:

I split the moon with the Light of Muṣṭafā *(Nūr-i Muṣṭafā).*

Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2967:31491, KSD6 p.210, in MDI p.217

In *Shīʿah* belief, the *Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah* was manifest in their *imāms.* According to a saying attributed by the Muslim historian Masʿūdī to the seventh *imām* Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq:

The Light descended upon our most noble men, and shone through
our *imāms,* so that we are the lights of heaven and earth.

Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, in "Jaʿfar al-Sadiq," in BESA p.214, in SRHI p.139

Rūmī, however, says that the real living *imām,* the one who is truly a manifestation of the *Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah* in this world, is the perfect saint regardless of his blood lineage, and whether he comes before or after Muḥammad:

That saint *(walī),* then, is the living *imām*
who arises in every age. . . .

He is as the Light *(Nūr)* (of Muḥammad),
and Wisdom *(Khirad)* is his Gabriel (divine messenger).
Rūmī, Maśnavī II:817, 819; cf. MJR2 p.263

Characteristically, when speaking of the perfect saints, Rūmī finds an opportunity to extol their virtues. Hence, one of his characters says that contact with Muḥammad has rid him of the fear of death. In fact, he now sees beyond death:

When I was young, I used to regard farewell to this world as death.
How could anyone greet death eagerly?
How could he go unarmed to meet the dragon?
But now, through the Light of Muḥammad *(Nūr-i Muḥammad),*
I am not subject to this city (small world) that is perishable.
Beyond the senses, I behold the camp of the king,
thronged with the army of the light of God,
Tent upon tent and tent rope upon tent rope:
thanks be to Him who awakened me from slumber!
Rūmī, Maśnavī III:3429–33; cf. MJR4 p.193

In his *Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz,* Rūmī refers to his master Shams-i Tabrīz as the "Light of Muḥammad" and the "incorporeal Spirit", upon whose arrival souls begin their journey back to God and immortality:

Unbelief has put on mourning garments:
the Light of Muḥammad *(Nūr-i Muḥammad)* has arrived.
The drum of immortality has been beaten:
the eternal kingdom has arrived.
The face of earth is turned green: heaven has rent her robe;
Once again the moon is split: the incorporeal Spirit has arrived.
The world is filled with sugar, happiness has bound its waist;
Arise, for once again that moon-cheeked one has arrived.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 882:9231–33, KSD2 p.192; cf. MP1 (113:1–3) p.97

See also: **Christ** (7.1), **al-Nūr** (2.1), **nūr** (‣3).

1. *Ḥadīth, AMBF* 342.
2. *Ḥadīth,* in "Nūr Muḥammadī," in *NEI.*
3. *Cf. Ḥadīth, Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal; cf. Ḥadīth,* Tirmidhī, *Manāqib* 1, *Aḥmad* 4:66, 5:59, 379; in *EIM* p.94 (n.43); *cf.* Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Meccan Revelations* 3:141.7, *FMIA5* (4:337) p.209, *SPK* p.240.
4. *Ḥadīth, AMBF* 546, in *Maśnavī* V:2734 (heading); *cf. MJR6* p.164.
5. In fact, *Nūr ʿalá Nūr* (Light upon Light), *Qurʾān* 24:35.
6. *Qurʾān* 54:1, *AYA; Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 6:60.387, *HSB.*

nūrī swarūp (H), **nūrī sarūp** (Pu) *Lit.* luminous *(nūrī)* form *(swarūp);* light form; the body emanating light; the radiant or astral form, particularly of a master. The astral form is so called because it radiates its own light, sparkling and scintillating as if covered with star dust. It is much lighter and finer than the physical body and is an integral part of human functioning, though a person is usually unconscious of it. It is a part of the means whereby the soul enlivens all parts of the mind and physical body. *Nūrī swarūp* is a hybrid expression used in North India. *Nūrī* (luminous, of light) is Arabic, while *swarūp* is Hindi, from the Sanskrit *svarūpa* (one's own form), implying one's own natural, innate or real form.

At initiation, a master of the Word takes his place in his *nūrī swarūp* within his disciple at a centre somewhat further in than the eye centre *(do-dal kamal),* known in Indian terminology, as *ashṭ dal kanwal* (eight-petalled lotus), lying on the threshold of the astral planes. It is the longing and desire to see and communicate with this beautiful form of the master that ultimately becomes the overriding force in a disciple's life. It is this yearning that purifies and extinguishes the lower tendencies of the mind, ultimately enabling it to see the radiant form within. This longing and yearning is actually initiated by the master, whose love draws his disciple to him on the inner planes. From there, they traverse together the inner journey back to God.

See also: **ashṭ-dal kamal**.

pair-companion See **twin**.

paraclete (Gk. *paraklētos*) Advocate, mediator, intercessor, teacher, helper, counsellor; from *parakalein* (to summon as a helper); translated in the King James Version of John's gospel as Comforter, where the term appears in four places, and is said to be the Holy Ghost. It is called the Comforter because it brings true peace and rest to the soul. After his death, says Jesus, he will send the "Comforter" to his disciples; and that Comforter is nowhere outside; it is "in you":

> And I will pray to the Father,
> that he shall give you another Comforter *(Paraklētos),*
> that it may abide with you forever –
> Even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive,
> because it neither sees nor knows it – but you know it;
> For it dwells with you, and is within you.
> I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
>
> *John 14:16–18; cf. KJV*[1]

This Comforter will be the real teacher of inner mystic truth, which transcends all outer teaching. The soul will 'remember' or realize everything that it had known when it was with God:

> But the Comforter *(Paraklētos),* which is the Holy Ghost,
> whom the Father will send in my name –
> It will teach you all things,
> and bring all things to your remembrance,
> whatever I have told you.
>
> *John 14:26; cf. KJV*

In fact, says Jesus, it is necessary for him to leave, because while he is still with his disciples in the body, their lives are entirely focused around his outer form. Only when he has died, and the disciples feel the yearning to be with their master again, will they be forced to seek him inside, in their meditation:

> Nevertheless I tell you the truth:
> it is expedient for you that I go away;
> For if I go not away,
> the Comforter *(Paraklētos)* will not come to you;
> But if I depart, I will send it to you.
>
> *John 16:7; cf. KJV*

The true inner form of a master or saviour is the Word or Holy Spirit, and it is probably this to which Jesus is referring. For the benefit of each disciple, the Spirit takes form at the disciple's level. In the inner heavens, this has been called the light, the radiant, or the spiritual form of the master. The focus of a master's teachings is to persuade, cajole and inspire his disciples to go within themselves. Often this means creating love for the outer form of the master, and then leaving that form so that their love will then drive the disciples to seek him within. Naturally, this only applies to the direct disciples of that master, not to others who may later claim to be followers.

Later Christians have generally understood the Comforter to be the Spirit within. In the *Acts of Thomas,* for instance, Jesus is addressed as the

> Voice that came forth from the Height,
> Comforter dwelling within the hearts of your believers.
>
> *Acts of Thomas 156; cf. AAA p.288, ANT p.432*

Thomas à Kempis likewise identifies an awareness of the inner Spirit with the presence of Jesus:

> All worldly solace and human comfort is short-lived and empty; but blessed and certain is the comfort received inwardly from the Truth.

> A devout man always bears Jesus, his Comforter, in his heart, and says to Him: "Lord Jesus, I beseech you to be with me in every place and at every time."
>
> *Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ 3:16; cf. IC p.128, ICTK p.114*

Relating the passage from *John* to later times, Johann Tauler interprets the departure of Christ as the feeling of lack of inner contact, and the resulting sense of darkness and despondency. Commenting on the passage from *John,* he says:

> What is meant by Christ's going away from us? Nothing else than our destitution, hopelessness, and helplessness, when we are heavy and slow in all good things, and cold and dark; for then Christ is gone from us. And it is a truly noble thing if those who are in this state are able to master and to bend it, rendering it useful and fruitful for themselves. To such a person, all change becomes as one, and he feels joy in sorrow, is patient under reproach, is in constant peace amid war and trouble, and all bitterness to him becomes true sweetness.
>
> *Johann Tauler, Sermons 16; cf. HLT pp.320–21*

The term paraclete is also integral to the beliefs concerning Mānī. According to the standard account related in the western areas of his ministry, Mānī, who had been raised in a gnostic Judaeo-Christian Elkasite community, claimed to have received a revelation of all he taught from a heavenly twin, of which he was the earthly counterpart. In the Coptic *Kephalaia,* attributed to Mānī himself (though it must have been a translation into Coptic), this twin is known as the paraclete, and is said to be the paraclete promised in John's gospel. That is to say, Mānī claimed his higher self to be, or to be one with, the Holy Spirit:

> My apostolate, of which you asked, began when the church (*i.e.* community) of the saviour (Jesus) was raised to the heights. From that time on was sent the paraclete, the Spirit of Truth; the one who has come to you in this last generation. Just as the saviour said: "When I go, I will send to you the paraclete." . . .
>
> In this same year when King Ardashīr was crowned, the living paraclete came down and spoke to me. He revealed to me the hidden mystery, hidden from the worlds and the generations: the mystery of the Depth and the Height. He revealed to me the mystery of the Light and the Darkness, the mystery of the conflict and the great war stirred up by the Darkness; . . . the mystery of the messengers who were sent out into the world to select the churches. . . . Thus did the paraclete reveal to me all that has been and all that will be, and all that the eye sees and the ear hears and the thought thinks. Through him I learned

to know everything, I saw the All through him, and I became one body and one spirit with him.

Kephalaia 14–15; cf. GSR pp.2–3, KOT pp.20–21, MM pp.26–27

In letters attributed to Mānī, he speaks of himself as "Mānī, Messenger of Jesus Christ". Manichaean sources in the East, however, where many of Mānī's disciples had a Buddhist background, claimed Mānī to have been Maitreya, the *bodhisattva* who would be the next Buddha. In fact, a study of the various texts and surviving fragments of Manichaean teachings indicate that there were regional variations in belief among the later Manichaeans. In the East, some later Manichaeans ascribed to Mānī a life based upon that of the Buddha.

Like many religions, the history is confused, fragmentary and inconsistent, and the authenticity of these 'autobiographical' texts is uncertain. Certainly, the beliefs of the later Manichaean religion are at variance with the universal mystic teachings, as are those of Christianity. Nevertheless, they contain so much of the mystic teachings concerning the Word as the creative power, the role of the living saviour, transmigration of the soul, the soul's return to its true spiritual home and escape from this world, vegetarianism and teetotalism, spiritual practice, love and devotion – and so on – that it seems more than likely that Mānī and his successors did indeed teach the ancient mystic path, and that it was the followers of the religion that developed later who misconstrued and unwittingly misrepresented his teachings.

The paraclete, identified by Mānī as his 'heavenly twin' or 'celestial counterpart', was also said to be his higher self or real form. This is something that all masters have taught, since the real self of a saviour is the Holy Spirit or Word. The paraclete has a prominent place in the Coptic psalm book. It is equated with the "Tree of Life", the creative power:

Glory and victory to the paraclete-spirit,
the fruitful Tree of Life.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXVII, MPB p.22

It is used as a term for Mānī himself:

We are the children of the paraclete, our Lord Mānī.

Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXXI; cf. MPB p.27

Forgive the sins of those that know your mystery,
to whom there has been revealed
the knowledge of the secret of the Most High
through the holy Wisdom wherein there is no error,
of the holy church of the paraclete, our father (Mānī).

Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXII; cf. MPB p.8

It is also used for Jesus:

> Come, my Lord Jesus, the saviour of souls,
> who hast saved me from the drunkenness and error of the world.
> You are the paraclete whom I have loved since my youth:
> your light shines forth in me like the lamp of light;
> You have driven away from me the oblivion of error,
> you have taught me to bless God and His lights. . . .
>
> The light has shone forth for you –
> O you that sleep in hell (this world) –
> the knowledge of the paraclete, the ray of light;
> Drink of the Water of Memory,
> cast away oblivion.
> He that is wounded and desires healing,
> let him come to the physician.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCXLVIII; cf. MPB pp.56–57*

And again:

> Let us worship the Spirit of the paraclete.
> Let us bless our Lord Jesus
> who has sent to us the Spirit of Truth.
> He came and separated us from the error of the world.
> He brought us a mirror:
> we looked, we saw the universe in it.
> When the Holy Spirit came he revealed to us the Way of Truth
> and taught us that there are two natures –
> that of light and that of darkness,
> separate from each other from the beginning.
>
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXIII; cf. MPB p.9*

Mānī lived during the third century. The contents of the Coptic psalm book and its probable dating to the fourth century indicate that it bears witness to the early stage in the formation of the new Manichaean religion.

See also: **faraqlīṭ**, **second coming** (▸3), **twin**.

1. *Cf. John* 15:26.

pīshānī (P) *Lit.* brows, forehead; in Sufi imagery, the forehead of the beloved, which signifies the manifestation of the inner beloved and the associated mystical illumination;[1] synonymous with *jabīn.*

The knotting, furrowing or frowning of the beloved's brows signify His 'displeasure', in the sense that he is keeping the lover in separation, and has not yet opened the way to the inner meeting with his spiritual form:

In those heart-binding eyebrows *(abrū)*
lies help for yearning lovers.
For God's sake, be with us for a moment:
relax your knotted brows *(pīshānī).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.272, DIH p.426; cf. DHWC (569:10) p.922

See also: **abrū**, **jabīn**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.79; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.182; Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.140.

porter See **doorkeeper**.

qadd (A), **qad** (P) *Lit.* stature, figure; in Sufi imagery, the grandeur and beauty of the beloved, often linked with the grace and stature of the cypress *(sarv),* itself a common metaphor for the spiritual master; often qualified by adjectives such as lofty *(bālā),* upright *(ustuvār), alif*-like (the *alif* character is a single vertical stroke), graceful *(khirāmān),* cypress-like *(sarv),* and so on; more or less synonymous in Persian with *qāmat* (figure, stature); appears in the Arabic, "*qadd qāmat al-ṣalāh* (prayer has been established)", where *qad* and *qāmat* have the same meaning, and which is spoken by the *imām* (prayer leader) when leading ritual prayer.

Compared to the beloved's form, Sanā'ī finds the most graceful and beautiful objects of this world to be lacking:

Beside your striding stature *(qad),*
the cypress *(sarv)* walks with graceless gait;
Beside your radiant cheek *(khadd),*
the brilliance of the moon seems pale.
Sanā'ī, Dīvān 403, AMM p.1041; cf. in SSE1 p.108

Ḥāfiẓ says the same:

Nothing more graceful *(nāzanīn)* than your stature *(qad)*
grows upon the green meadow of grace.
Were the world a painting,
there could be no painting lovelier than you.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.100, DIH p.189; cf. DHWC (261:4) p.465

Many legends are told of the fabulous *Ṭūbā* or Lote Tree of paradise. Its spread is so large that the fastest rider could not ride around it in a thousand years. Its leaves correspond to the number of human beings on earth, a leaf for each person, which dies when he dies. It can produce any food demanded of it by a Muslim in paradise. The expression of praise, "*Ṭūbā qad* (lofty stature, graceful stature)" is common in Persian poetry.[1] Yet, says Saʿdī, it cannot match the beauty of the perfect beloved:

Forget the cypress *(sarv),*
even if the *Ṭūbā* tree were to enter the garden,
it would feel ashamed
on beholding your graceful figure *(qad-i khirāmān).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 58:6, KSSS p.255; cf. TOS p.82

Ḥāfiẓ likewise praises the grace and beauty of the beloved:

No moon has shone like you
from the mansion of Goodness;
No cypress *(sarv)* has grown with your stature *(qad)*
from the river of Beauty.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.208, DIH p.338; cf. DHWC (447:3) p.749

He likens the beloved to the eternal saint Khiżr; he is the source of the creative power, the Water of Life; and – in a passage reminiscent of the biblical *Song of Songs* – his beauty is incomparable:[2]

Your lip *(lab)* is (ever fresh like) Khiżr,
and your mouth *(dahān)* the Water of Life:
Your stature *(qad)* like the cypress,
your waist a hair, and your chest like lustrous ivory.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.45, DIH p.108; cf. DHWC (111:8) p.233

See also: **qāmat**, **sarv**.

1. See L.W. King, *Odes of Saʿdī, TOS* p.82 (n.2).
2. *Song of Songs* 4:1–5, 5:10–16, *passim.*

qamar (A/P) *Lit.* moon, not usually including the crescent moon *(hilāl);* being dazzled; lying awake in the moonlight; in Persian poetry, a symbol of beauty; in Sufi symbolism, the divine beloved, often implying the radiant and beautiful inner beloved.

Saʿdī says that, once encountered, life without the beloved is unthinkable:

O beloved *(dil-rubā)!* O heart-ravishing moon *(qamar):*
I can do without everyone else, but cannot dispense with you.
Since your image has been imprinted on my sincere heart,
there is no room left for any other idea in my mind.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 96:1–2, KSSS pp.368–69, BOS p.106

Rūmī heralds the appearance of his own master Shams-i Tabrīz:

Unbelief has put on mourning garments:
the Light of Muḥammad *(Nūr-i Muḥammad)* has arrived.
The drum of immortality has been beaten:
the eternal kingdom has arrived.
The face of earth is turned green:
heaven has rent her robe;
Once again the moon is split:
the incorporeal Spirit has arrived.
The world is filled with sugar,
happiness has bound its waist;
Arise, for once again
that moon-cheeked *(qamarīn khadd)* one has arrived.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 882:9231–33, KSD2 p.192; cf. MP1 (113:1–3) p.97

Abū Saʿīd simply refers to the beloved as the "moon of love *(qamar al-ḥubb)*":

The clouds of separation have been cleared away
from the moon of love *(qamar al-ḥubb):*
The light of morning has shone forth
from the darkness of the Unseen.
Abū Saʿīd al-Khayr, in Kashf al-Maḥjūb XIV:9, KMM p.322; cf. KM p.250

See also: **hilāl** (7.1), **māh**.

qāmat (A/P) *Lit.* figure, stature; the full figure or full length of the figure; full stature; in Sufi imagery, the grandeur, beauty and worshipfulness of the beloved, often linked with the grace and stature of the cypress *(sarv),* itself a common metaphor for the spiritual master; often qualified by adjectives such as lofty *(bālā),* upright *(ustuvār),* graceful *(khirāmān),* cypress-like *(sarv),* and so on; more or less synonymous with *qad* (stature, figure).

According to the *Qurʾān:* "He has let the two seas meet; between them is a barrier *(barzakh),* which they do not seek to cross."[1] This *barzakh* and its two seas have been interpreted in many ways. The Arab philosopher Ibn

Sīnā interprets the *barzakh* as dividing the essential or Necessary Being (*Wājib al-Wujūd,* God, the only Being who is and must be, who exists eternally in reality) from relative or contingent being (*mumkin al-wujūd,* all created beings). The perfect man *(al-insān al-kāmil)* or perfect master is often depicted as the *barzakh* or isthmus, for he touches both the seas, the created and the Divine. His full inner stature or full-length figure spans the entire creation.[2]

A glimpse of the perfect man (inside or out) causes the lover to become impatient for union:

> Roses become like briars,
> impatiently snatching at his coat *(dāman),*
> when his figure *(qāmat)* towers tall,
> striding across the flower-strewn field.
> *Ṣā'ib Tabrīzī, Kullīyāt, KSMN p.513; cf. in SSE1 p.110*

Others may long to see the wonders of the legendary *Ṭūbā* tree of paradise, but the lover longs only for the figure of the beloved:

> You and the Ṭūbā tree, I and the figure *(qāmat)* of the beloved:
> everyone's ideals are limited to their aspirations.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.27, DIH p.71; cf. DHWC (22:3) p.75*

The radiance and beauty of the inner form of the beloved captivates and guides the soul as it strives to rise up from its own seeming darkness in nightly meditation:

> Your winsome cheek *('āriż),* like the moonlight,
> guides the night traveller.
> Your lovely stature *(qāmat-i ra'nā),* like a comely cypress,
> strolls through the lovers' hearts.
> *Sanā'ī, Dīvān 34, AMM p.810; cf. in SSE1 pp.103–4*

See also: **barzakh** (4.1), **qadd**.

1. *Qur'ān* 25:53, 55:19–20.
2. *Cf.* Lāhījī, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR* p.578.

radiant form See **astral form**.

rū, **rū'i**, **rūy** (P) *Lit.* face, countenance, visage, cheek; mystically and metaphorically, the face of God; hence, God Himself; also, the form of the master, either physically or, often, spiritually; thus, the spiritual form of the divine beloved, encountered on the inner planes, commonly described in Sufism as the mirror in which the soul sees the beauty of the Divine.[1]

Just as human lovers long to see the face of their beloved, so the souls of mystic lovers long only to see the face of the divine beloved – to become one with the divine beloved within. Without that vision, the soul writhes in the blissful pain of yearning and separation. The lover may contemplate the face of the master *(shaykh, murshid,* or *pīr)* in his earthly form, or in some higher form in the internal realms. Whatever level the lover has attained, the beloved manifests himself in a corresponding form, so that the lover may see him. In whatever form he finds the beloved, the lover can never get enough of that 'face'. It is the contemplation of that 'face' that will ultimately free the lover from the lower creation, and cause him to return to the face of God in eternity. But, as Rūmī says, he must first lose both his head and his heart:

No one becomes aware of that royal Presence
until he comes home without heart and intellect.
He is mad who has seen your face *(rūy),*
and then remained separated from you without going mad!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz, Rubā'īyāt 618, KSD8 p.105; cf. in SPL p.297

Speaking of meeting the beloved within in nightly meditation, but being separated from that vision at other times, Rūmī and Sa'dī are both addressing the beloved:

You open a window from paradise
for him to whom you show your face *(rūy)* at early dawn.
Sa'dī, Badāyi' 162:1, KSSS p.385; cf. BOS p.178

Do not let your night-companion be banished in the daytime:
do not inflict farness on the soul that has experienced nearness.
Absence from you is a grievous and tormenting death,
especially the absence that comes after enjoyment of your favour.
Do not put him that has seen you
in the position of one that has not seen you:
sprinkle water on his verdure that has sprung up. . . .
Oh, do not drive him who has once beheld your face *(rūy),*
far from your face *(rūy)!*
Seeing other than your face *(rūy)* has become a torture!
Everything but God is vanity!
Rūmī, Maśnavī VI:2893–95, 2897–98; cf. MJR6 p.418, in SPL p.297

The sight of your face *(rūy)* each morning
is like a New Year's day;
The night of your separation, whenever it happens,
resembles the longest night in winter.
O God! Grant release to all captives,
save to him who is a prisoner in the noose of a Beauty.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 36:7–8, KSSS p.353; cf. BOS p.40

To such lovers, nothing has any value or even reality except contemplation on the beloved's face:

Know that any business or work
other than contemplating your face *(rūy)*
is unbelief in the Way and ignorance of the Truth.
As soon as you showed that countenance *(rukh),*
you stole away the intellect and faith. . . .
You have made the spirit mad and the heart an ocean.
How could the heart look at any other beloved?
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1094:11541–43, KSD3 p.9; cf. in SPL p.299

I swear by your life that
except the sight of your countenance *(rūy),*
all, though it be the kingdom of the earth,
is fable and fantasy.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 332:3596, KSD1 p.200;
cf. MP1 (40:8) p.37, in SPL p.299

The people of spiritual insight *(ahl-i naẓar)*
are those who contemplate your face *(rū)* with love:
The rest are blind.
Some are concerned about religion
and others about mundane affairs;
But vain is the concern they feel for anything
beside the love of your face *(rū).* . . .
The eye that has not beheld your Beauty *(Jamāl),*
what has it seen?
Alas for those that pass their time in indifference to you.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 115:3–4, 6, KSSS p.268; cf. TOS pp.158–59

Whoever beholds your face *(rūy)* looks at no one else;
He is never satiated with love,
nor can he have enough of its joy. . . .

I long so ardently to die at your feet
 that I have no desire to live any longer.
After such a long interval,
 will you not for an instant call to mind a lover
 who cannot help remembering you every moment?
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 167:1, 3–4, KSSS p.281; cf. in TOS p.227

In contemplation of the inner beloved, such lovers lose all sense of their own identity:

I am so much in love with your face *(rūy),*
 that I have lost all consciousness of self. . . .

To what shall I liken you in all the universe?
You are more beautiful than my wildest dreams. . . .
Such a face *(rūy)* as yours should not be unveiled,
 for you steal away the hearts of all mankind
 with every sidelong glance.
Blindness is the only disease that can be ascribed to the eye
 that is not enamoured of your face *(dīdār).*

Because of the suffering entailed by your love,
 I thought of wandering in the world;
But how can I do so, since wherever I roam,
 you are present before my (inner) eye? . . .

Should you unveil and reveal your face *(rukh),*
 you would divulge the secrets of all mystics.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 149:2–3, 4–6, 10, KSSS p.382; cf. BOS pp.163–64

The lover may complain that the beloved hides his face, but actually it is the lover who is veiled:

You whose face *(rūy)* is hidden
 behind the veil of the two worlds,
Why do you not remove that veil of the two worlds? . . .
But wait – no, no – I am wrong:
Your face *(rūy)* is more real than any sun of the two worlds!
I am the one who is veiled and kept far off,
 removed from your face *(rūy),* behind the veil of the two worlds.
Maghribī, Dīvān 153:1493, 1498–99, DSMR p.183; cf. in SSE1 pp.72–73

Wherever the lover may go, his beloved is with him:

Wherever we go, the image *(khayāl)* of your countenance *(rū)*
accompanies us, to comfort us on every road.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.25, DIH p.69; cf. DHWC (97:1) p.213

While living in the body and in this world of six directions ("this six-sided monastery"), it may seem impossible to reach the beloved; yet the beloved, whose abode is in the divine Nonexistence, has access to the soul through the inner window:

O my moon, my bright candle!
From the time I first saw your face *(rū)*,
wherever I sit, I am joyful,
wherever I go, I dwell in the midst of roses.
Wherever the king's image *(khayāl-i shāh)* may be,
that is a garden and place of contemplation;
Whatever station I enter, I am wrapped in pleasure.
Although the doors of this six-sided monastery are closed,
the moon-faced beloved sticks his head in my window
from no-place *(lā-makān)*.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1383:14632–34, KSD3 p.175, in SPL p.298

Mystic lovers, therefore, have nothing but praise for their beloved:

I have never seen a face *(rū)* like this!
In no way do you resemble the form of which I heard tell.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1417:14979, KSD3 p.193; cf. in SPL p.297

Even if you should strictly forbid me to see you face to face,
I will never permit the image of your face *(rū)* to leave my mind. . . .
I thought I would sacrifice my life for the love of your face *(rū)*,
and then I felt ashamed at the paltriness of my offering.
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 104:5, 8, KSSS p.370; cf. BOS pp.114–15

O heart-illuminating candle!
Without your heart-adorning face *(rū)*,
my heart is dancing on the fire like roast meat.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHM (57:11) p.85, DIH p.100; cf. DHWC (48:11) p.125

See also: **rukh**, **rukhsār**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.88; Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-ʾi Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.135; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.441; all in *SSE1* pp.71–72.

Rūḥ al-Amīn, **al-** (A), **Rūḥ-i Amīn** (P) *Lit.* trusted *(amīn)* spirit *(rūḥ),* trusty spirit, trustworthy spirit; true spirit, spirit of faith and truth; an epithet of the angel Gabriel, used in the *Qur'ān;*[1] also called *al-Rūḥ* (the Spirit).

According to Muslim belief, every *rasūl* (messenger) receives his message through an intermediary, usually Gabriel. The *Qur'ān* itself is expressly said to have been brought by Gabriel to Muḥammad.[2] Elsewhere in the *Qur'ān,* the intermediary between God and man is again said to be *al-Rūḥ* (the Spirit), generally interpreted to mean Gabriel.[3]

In Sufism, *al-Rūḥ al-Amīn* symbolizes *al-ʿAql al-Awwal,* the Primal Intelligence or creative power, the true divine Spirit; sometimes used by Rūmī for the perfect saint or for his inner reality. In this passage, Rūmī first pictures the divine lover as a person with dropsy (oedema), his body distended by water retention, yet still desiring more water. Then he likens the death of his own self by annihilation in the divine beloved to physical death, to the spilling of his own blood, a process in which he himself participates. The lover says:

I am dropsical: the water draws me,
though I know that the water too will kill me.
None afflicted with dropsy will flee from the water,
even if it checkmate and ruin him two hundred times.
If my hands and belly become swollen,
yet the passionate desire for the water will not leave me.
At the time when they ask me of my inward state,
I say, "Would that the (divine) Sea were flowing within me!"
Let the waterskin, my belly, be burst by the waves of the water:
if I die, my death is acceptable.
Wherever I see the water of a stream,
jealousy comes over me, that I might be in its place.
With hands swollen like a tambourine and a belly like a drum,
I am beating the drum of my love for the water, like the rose.

If that Trusty Spirit *(al-Rūḥ al-Amīn)* spill my blood,
I will drink draught on draught of blood, like the earth.
I am a blood drinker, like the earth and like the embryo:
since I became a lover I have been in this trade.
During the night, I boil on the fire, like a kettle;
all day till nightfall I drink blood, like the sand.

Rūmī, Maśnavī III:3884–93; cf. MJR4 p.218

1. *Qur'ān* 26:193.
2. *Qur'ān* 2:97–98.
3. *Qur'ān* 17:85, 26:193, 40:15, 70:4, 97:4.

Rūḥ al-Muḥammadīyah, **al-** (A), **Rūḥ-i Muḥammad**, **Rūḥ Muḥammadī** (P) *Lit.* the Spirit *(al-Rūḥ)* of Muḥammad; the true nature of Muḥammad; the archetype of Muḥammad; the inner Spirit or true nature that was the real essence of Muḥammad; also called *al-Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah* (the Light of Muḥammad) and *al-Ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadīyah* (the Reality of Muḥammad). See **al-Nūr al-Muḥammadīyah**.

rukh (P) *Lit.* face, countenance, visage, cheek; mystically and metaphorically, the face of God; hence, God Himself; also, the form of the master, either physically or, often, spiritually; thus, the spiritual form of the divine beloved, encountered on the inner planes, commonly described in Sufism as the manifestation *(tajalliyāt)* of divine Beauty or radiant form of the beloved;[1] also appears in expressions such as *gul-rukh* (rosy cheeked), *parī-rukh* (fairy faced), beautiful face *(rukh-i zībā),* and so on, implying the spiritual illumination and beauty of the beloved; also, the divine Essence, including all that is both latent and expressed.[2]

Many Sufis have spoken of this beautiful inner form. This face or form cannot be understood by the human mind:

> Science cannot dissect her lips,
> nor can her face *(rukh)* be grasped by the intellect.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 740:9809, DASN p.517; cf. in SSE1 p.115*

In fact, the essential reality of that form far surpasses anything of this world or the next:

> If the veil were to fall from his face *(rukh)* for an instant,
> the two worlds would appear as playthings of the imagination.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 338:5395, DASN p.289; cf. in SSE9 p.10*

One glimpse of that face will forever change a seeker's life:

> Just once remove the veil
> shrouding your bright-hued face *(rukh),*
> so that I may forever give my heart
> and abandon my reason to you.
> *Sanāʾī, Dīvān 270, AMM p.957; cf. in SSE1 p.63*

> When a spark from the fire of your face *(rukh)*
> fell upon the world from above,
> my heart, drunken and wasted, was flooded with love.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 44:2103, DASN p.121; cf. in SSE1 p.62*

The radiance of your face *(rukh)*
magnifies the believer's sense of God's glory.
Sanā'ī, Dīvān 39, AMM p.814; cf. in SSE1 p.63

Yet purity of an almost unimaginable order must first be attained:

Only one of pure vision can behold the beloved's face *(rukh):*
for without purity, one cannot look into that mirror.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.72, DIH p.147; cf. DHWC (127:7) p.265

The ego has to be annihilated and lost in the radiance of the beloved:

Until the sunlight of her face *(rukh)* humbles you like a shadow,
you will never be able to follow that lofty stature, that lofty height.
Maghribī, Dīvān 76:732, DSMR p.131; cf. in SSE1 p.15

Therefore, the lover longs for the inner vision of the beloved's face:

Show your face *(rukh),*
for I desire the orchard and the rose garden;
Open your lips, for I desire sugar in plenty.
O sun of beauty, come forth for a moment from behind the cloud,
for that radiant, glowing countenance *(chihrah)* is my desire. . . .

My soul is grown weary of Pharaoh and his tyranny:
I desire the light of the countenance *(rūy)* of Moses. . . .
O Sun, glory of Tabrīz, reveal the dawning of love:
I am the hoopoe – the presence of Solomon is my desire.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 441:4626–27, 4636, 4649,
KSD1 pp.255–56; cf. SDST (XVI) pp.64–69

The inner beloved is truly the light of the lover's life:

Without the sun of your face *(rukh),*
my days are without light:
Nothing remains in my life save the darkest night.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.19, DIH p.60; cf. DHWC (71:1) p.172

The lover has no real interest in anything else:

Like a hooded falcon, I have closed my eyes on all the world:
My eyes are open only on your beautiful cheek *(rukh-i zībā).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.12, DIH p.53; cf. DHWC (87:7) p.195

The lover is constantly absorbed in the thought of the beloved, unable to forget him:

> Your image never leaves the tablet of my heart and soul;
> That nobly moving cypress never leaves my memory.
> The image of the beloved's cheek *(rukh-i dūst)*
> is not dispelled from my distraught brain,
> even by the ravages of time and the tribulations of destiny.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.121, DIH p.215; cf. DHWC (258:1–2) p.462*

See also: **ʿāriḍ**, **chihrah**, **dīdār**, **khadd**, **liqāʾ**, **rū**, **rukhsār**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭalʿah**.

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.88, in *SSE1* p.61.
2. Lāhījī, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Rāz, SGR* p.552, in *SSE1* p.64.

rukhsār (P) (pl. *rukhsāragān*) *Lit.* cheek, face, countenance, complexion, mien; in Sufi imagery, the spiritual beloved within, the divine Source. *Rukhsār* was originally used to translate the Arabic *khadd* (cheek), later coming to mean countenance, face, *etc.,* as well. In the plural, *rukhsāragān* means 'cheeks', but can also mean any pair of facial features, such as the eyes, the ears, and so on. In this sense, it has also been translated as 'features'.[1]

When speaking of the inner beloved, the Sufi poets rarely distinguish between the vision of the supreme divine Essence and intermediate stages along the way. In many cases, all meanings were probably intended. Hence, ʿIrāqī writes:

> Happy the eye that sees your face *(rukhsār),*
> blissful the soul *(jān)* of whom you are the beloved *(jānān).*
> *ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 4043–44, KHI p.282*

And Saʿdī maintains:

> If, in the garden, there were a rose like your face *(rukhsār),*
> the earth would be exalted above the heavens by its perfect beauty.
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 145:1, KSSS p.381; cf. BOS p.159*

On the other hand, Maghribī is probably referring to God Himself when he says:

> Though every atom is ablaze,
> scintillating with His clear effulgence,
> yet His sun-bright face *(rukhsār)* is veiled
> from Maghribī's sight.
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 23:236, DSMR p.83*

Maghribī also refers to a well-known *ḥadīth,* which says that, when in union with the Divine, the Sufi becomes the eyes through which God sees, and the ears through which He hears.[2] This being so, Maghribī argues that there is no reason for the Beloved to veil Himself:

> When Your eyes are the only ones that see Your face *(rukhsār),*
> why do You hide Your sun-bright face *(rūy)* in veils?
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 172:1709, in DSMR p.199*

And again:

> Since You contemplate Your beauty
> through these eyes of mine,
> why do You not remove the veil
> from Your face *(rukhsār)* so fine?
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 191:1883, DSMR p.212; cf. in SSE1 p.71*

See also: '**āriḍ**, **khadd**, **rū**, **rukh**.

1. Javād Nūrbakhsh, *Sufi Symbolism, SSE1* p.69.
2. *Ḥadīth Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* 8:76.509.

rūpakāya (S/Pa), **sèshēn** (C), **shikishin** (J) *Lit.* form *(rūpa, sè, shiki)* body *(kāya, shēn, shin);* a general, early Buddhist term for both the human, bodily form of the Buddha and for the *manomaya-kāya* (body made of mind, mind-made body), which is used for both the form in which a *buddha* exists in the subtle and celestial realms, and for a supernaturally produced, seemingly physical body (body made by mind, mind-made body). In the systematized *Mahāyāna trikāya* (having three bodies) doctrine, these two forms became known as *nirmāṇa-kāya* and *sambhoga-kāya,* as distinguished from the *dharmakāya,* the immaterial, spiritual, or Reality body. At a more mundane level, the Buddha's relics, preserved in various stupas where both monks and laity performed various forms of ritualistic worship, were also known as *rūpakāya.*

See also: **manomaya-kāya**, **trikāya**.

samaya-sattva (S), **dam tshig sems dpa'** (T) *Lit.* pledge *(samaya)* being *(sattva);* promised being, symbolic being; a tantric term for the form of a deity or celestial *bodhisattva* that is imagined by a practitioner in their meditation, and used as a focus for worship and devotion. In a concentrated mind, such images can become relatively stable, and the practitioner can perform various

forms of worship *(pūjā)* before the imagined form, which can induce a deeply devotional and blissful state of mind. In course of time, however, and with deep concentration, the *samaya-sattva* is supplanted by the *jñāna-sattva* (wisdom-being, T. *ye shes sems dpa'*), which is regarded as the real form of the heavenly being that has been made the object of concentration and worship. It is called a 'pledge' or 'promised' being because the imagined form is a promise of the real form. Whether or not this is actually a manifestation of the heavenly being or a projection of the higher mind of the practitioner, induced by the deep devotion and concentration on the imagined form, is at best uncertain, especially since the deities imagined are of a mythological and in many cases presumably fictitious nature.

The same principle applies to the inner manifestation of any deeply revered celestial being or spiritual master (past or present), whatever the religious or spiritual tradition may be.

See also: **jñāna-sattva**.

sambhoga-kāya (S), **bàoshēn** (C), **hōjin** (J) *Lit.* body *(kāya)* of enjoyment *(sambhoga);* body of delight or bliss; also, body *(shēn, jin)* of recompense or reward *(bào, hō).* According to the *Mahāyāna trikāya* (having three bodies) doctrine, the *sambhoga-kāya* is an extremely subtle and sublime, blissful and celestial body that emanates from the *dharmakāya* (Truth body), by which a *buddha* participates in existence in the celestial or heavenly realms, which are known as the pure lands or *buddha*-lands and are numbered in the millions of billions by *Mahāyāna sūtras.*

The *sambhoga-kāya* is also the heavenly body in which a *bodhisattva* enjoys the reward of his spiritual efforts. Hence, the heavenly regions are sometimes called *bhogabhūmi* (world of fruition). It must have been because of this connotation that the Sanskrit was translated into Chinese as body of recompense *(bàoshēn).* The *sambhoga-kāya* is the body in which the celestial *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* of the *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* traditions – such as Amitābha, Akshobhya and Vairochana, each dwelling in their own pure land – have their being, and in which they teach the *Dharma* to the heavenly host of *devas* (deities) and a multitude of other celestial beings. The *sambhoga-kāya* is also the form of the Buddha or of the *Dharma* that is encountered in inner visions and deep meditation. The *sambhoga-kāya* of a *buddha* is described as emanating vast light, that spreads throughout the *buddha*-lands. The magnificent iconographic representations of the celestial *buddhas* in Buddhist art, with their stereotyped colours and symbolic appurtenances, are an attempt to convey the glory of the *sambhoga-kāya* in human terms.

See also: **trikāya**.

sarv (P) *Lit.* a fir tree, especially a cypress tree; a tall, wide-spreading and stately tree, appearing in Persian poetry as a symbol of grace and elegant stature, especially – in Sufi poetry – as regards the *murshid* in both his physical and spiritual forms.

Sufi poets have used the imagery when speaking of their masters. Many are those who have sought such a master:

> O cypress-stature *(sarv-qad),* O tulip-cheek,
> many a one, perturbed and bewildered,
> wanders about in yearning for you.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DIH p.177; cf. DHWC (272:8) p.478*

And how joyful they are when they find him:

> How happy is the companion
> of a cypress-statured figure *(sarv-i bālā)* like you!
> For on him is bestowed divine favour and bounty *(niʿmat).*
> *Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 36:1, KSSS p.353; cf. BOS p.39*

The lover wants no more than to give his heart to his beloved:

> I burst open with joy *(ṭarab),*
> like a rose on a riverbank, when the shadow
> of that upright-statured cypress *(sarv-i sahī bālā)*
> towered above my head.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.87, DIH p.171; cf. DHWC (172:6) p.329*

> O cypress of lofty stature *(sarv-i bālā)* and graceful gait,
> subtle heart-ravisher, rosy-cheeked *(lālah ʿiźār)!*
> Now that you have ravished my heart with magic:
> for God's sake, keep it.
> Since I beheld your two bewitching eyes,
> my heart has known neither peace nor rest. . . .
> Ḥāfiẓ is bewildered:
> he is your slave, without gold or silver.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DIH p.230; cf. DHWC (297:1–3, 7) p.518*

See also: **qadd**, **sarv** (7.1).

ṣawmaʿah (A), **ṣawmaʿat** (P) *Lit.* bringing together; hermitage, monastery, cloister, monk's cell; church, abbey; in Sufi symbolism, a place where Sufis assemble; outwardly, a meeting place; inwardly, the sanctum of inner solitude

where the beloved, the divine cupbearer *(sāqī),* is encountered. Ḥāfiẓ writes that his attention is now focused on seeking the inner beloved:

It may be, O *khvājah* (master),
that you will see me in the hermitage *(ṣawmaʿat)* once again;
For my work now involves the *sāqī*'s face and the chalice lip.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.99, DIH p.186; cf. DHWC (179:4) p.346

The term also appears in the expression *ṣawāmiʿ al-dhikr* (hermitages of remembrance), which refers to inner states of consciousness in which the aspirant is protected from ever forgetting the divine beloved.

Shabd guru, **Shabd rūp**, **Shabd swarūp** (H), **Shabd sarūp** (Pu) *Lit.* Sound or Word *(Shabd)* master *(guru);* the Sound or Word *(Shabd)* form *(rūp, swarūp);* the embodiment *(rūp)* of the Sound or Word *(Shabd);* the highest and essential form of the master; the *Shabd* current of the supreme Being, which 'descends' through the higher spiritual realms to *brahmaṇḍa,* assumes the radiant form of the master in *aṇḍa,* and is manifested as the physical form of a perfect master in *piṇḍa:*

The Sound form *(Shabd sarūp)* is the true master:
he has neither beginning nor end.
He manifests as the body:
believe it firmly, O saints.
Kabīr, Akhrāvatī, Dohā, KSA p.3

He is always with me in Sound form *(Shabd swarūp)* –
never far away.
Have patience in your mind: you will see his true glory.
Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 33:29.3, SBP p.280

Establish your base at the third eye
and have *darshan* (vision) of the inner master.
Always listen to the voice of the *Shabd guru,*
burn to ashes the low cravings of your mind and merge into him.
This form of the master is of unsurpassed beauty –
it will light up your inner being,
like the radiant glow of the sun.
Like the black bee on a lotus in full bloom,
your soul will revel in the master's love.
Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Poetry 4:8:1–4, SBP pp.41–42

In himself, a perfect master is the embodiment of many divine qualities. Swami Shiv Dayal Singh writes that the master is the embodiment of the Sound *(Shabd)* and of all the divine attributes. Even so, the master's essence is formless *(arūp):*

> There is no fear of any sort when you are in the lap of the *satguru.* The *satguru* is always there to protect and look after his disciples. The disciple cannot know what is his will *(mauj),* and what he deems expedient; but he (the *satguru*) knows very well. He may make even the disciple realize, if he so pleases. He is the embodiment of the Sound *(Shabd rūp),* the embodiment of consciousness *(surat rūp),* the embodiment of love *(prem rūp),* the embodiment of bliss *(ānand rūp),* the embodiment of happiness *(harsh rūp),* and still he is formless *(arūp).*
>
> *Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, Sār Bachan Prose 2:261, SBAT pp.138–39*

The *Shabd guru* becomes the focus of the disciple's inner surrender:

> We automatically become desireless as we begin to relish the taste of *Shabd.* This does not mean that we have to give up all our efforts and interests in the world. We simply have to surrender ourselves completely to the *Shabd guru.* Then only can we achieve the state of complete desirelessness. Meanwhile, we should acquire the habit of resigning ourselves to the will of the Lord. Whatever He does is always best. The longing to reach our home is increased by means of meditation.
>
> *Maharaj Charan Singh, Divine Light, Letter 209, DL p.265*

It is the inner master, the *Shabd guru,* to whom a disciple turns for help in times of difficulty:

> Whenever you become conscious of the pain in your body, immediately put your attention in the *Satguru,* and try to listen to the *Shabd dhun* (melody of the Word). Then, through the Sound, the *Shabd guru* will at once send you his grace and mercy. Only the pain of the *karmas* you have to go through will then remain; all other *karmas* will be forgiven.
>
> *Baba Jaimal Singh, Spiritual Letters 6, SL p.9*

See also: **nija-rūp**, **svarūpa**.

shāhid (A/P) (pl. *shawāhid*) *Lit.* witness, sign, mark; evidence, proof, testimony; attestor, testifier; also, as *al-Shahīd,* God, the Witness who sees all things;[1]

also, an attributive epithet of Muḥammad, and by extension other saints and prophets, who are witnesses of God, bearing witness both of God and of the deeds of human beings; also, especially in Persian literature, an object of beauty, the beautiful beloved, the fair beloved, the fair one, some thing or person worthy of love; hence, the inner spiritual image or form of the beloved, since he is the witness of divine Beauty; from the same root as *shahādah* (declaration of faith), *mushāhadah* and *shuhūd* (witnessing, contemplation), *mushāhid* (witnesser), *mashhūd* (the one witnessed), *shahīd* (martyr), and so on; a common term in Sufi literature with a wide spread of meaning; commonly found in poetry as part of an alliterative triplet: *shamʿ* (candle, divine light), *sharāb* (wine, divine love), and *shāhid* (the beautiful beloved, the fair beloved, the fair one).

Rūmī uses the term in reference to the beautiful or "fair beloved" – the spiritual beloved who dwells behind the veil of the body. Here, he employs an untranslatable wordplay on the dual meaning of *shāhid,* as both 'fair beloved' and 'witness'. For "fair beloved", also read "witness". Rūmī is writing in the name of the eternal "fair beloved" himself:

> Become not weary of me,
> for I am a truly beautiful and fair beloved *(shāhid)!*
> Out of jealousy, I have hidden myself in a veil *(chādar).*
> On the day when I cast the veil of the body from the soul,
> you will see that I am the envy of the moon and stars.
> Wash your face and purify yourself so that you can see me,
> else keep your distance, for I am my own witness *(shāhid)!*
> I am not that kind of a fair beloved *(shāhid)*
> who will become an old crone tomorrow –
> I will be young, heart-refreshing,
> and fair of stature until eternity.
> Though the veil may wear out,
> the fair beloved *(shāhid)* will not age.
> The life of the veil is transient,
> but we are endless life.
>
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1705:17836–43, KSD4 pp.45–46;*
> *cf. MP2 (213:1–5) p.9, in SPL pp.309–10*

Rūmī is also clear that inner experiences with the beloved are not to be divulged to others:

> I always advise my disciples that when the brides of heavenly truth *('arūsān-i ma'nī)* show their faces to you within yourselves, and when the mysteries are unveiled to you, beware! Beware, lest you speak of it to others! Do not describe it! And do not tell the words that you hear

from me to just anybody. As the Prophet said, "Impart no wisdom to the unworthy, lest you do it an injustice; and withhold it not from the worthy, lest you do them an injustice."

Suppose you had a fair one *(shāhid)* or a beloved *(maʿshūqah),* concealed in your house, and she told you, "Do not show me to anyone, for I belong to you!" Would it ever be proper to parade her about the marketplace, calling out to everyone, "Come and see this beauty!"? Would your beloved like it? She would be furious with you.

Rūmī, Fīhi mā Fīhi 15:3–9, KFF p.70; cf. DRA pp.81–82, SOU p.73, in SPL p.309

Ḥāfiẓ and others have also expressed their love for the "fair" and inner beloved. He is the essence of beauty itself, requiring no make-up or ornament:

Listen to me: fix your heart on a fair beloved *(shāhid)*
whose beauty requires no adornment.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.66, DIH p.142; cf. DHWC (204:6) p.379

The intoxication of divine love should rule the heart:

In the eyes of our fair beloved *(shāhid),*
intoxication is fine.
That is why our reins have been entrusted to intoxication.

Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.6, DIH p.36; cf. DHWC (3:8) p.22

If divine love ("wine"), inner light ("candle") and the "fair beloved" are all present within, all the lover needs to do to behold him is to concentrate:

Wine *(sharāb),* candle *(shamʿ),* and fair beloved *(shāhid):*
all are there;
Do not become distracted:
pay attention to the fair beloved *(shāhid).*

Unattributed, in Mir'āt-i 'Ushshāq, in TAT p.208; cf. in SSE2 p.36

Yet, the beloved continues to play a heartrending game of hide and seek:

To whom can I speak these words?
"My sweetheart *(nigār)* is a wanton fair beloved *(shāhid-i harjā'ī),*
hidden behind a veil."

Sabzavārī, Dīvān, in FNI2 p.207; cf. in SSE2 p.37

A soul who is blessed with the vision of the "fair beloved" within is extraordinarily lucky:

A fair beloved *(shāhid)* with candle *(shamʿ)* in hand,
heavy with slumber and bemused with wine *(sharāb),* is a mischief.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 22:9, KSSS p.246; cf. TOS p.32

Blessed is the soul who is given the good fortune to behold this invisible fair beloved *(shāhid),* and enjoys the grace-bestowing gaze of men of God.
Rūmī, in Manāqib al-ʿĀrifīn 6:18, MASA2 p.768; cf. FKG (6:19) p.535

The master, inner or outer, is the light-giver to his disciples:

If the fair beloved *(shāhid)* is not in our midst,
let the candle *(shamʿ)* be extinguished:
If he be present, there is plenty of light even without a lamp.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 29:3, KSSS p.248; cf. TOS p.42

Using the imagery of a party, Saʿdī longs for a meeting with the inner beloved in his nightly devotions. Wine (divine love), sweetmeats (spiritual nourishment), and candle (inner light) are all metaphors:

It is night, the fair beloved *(shāhid),* a candle *(shamʿ),*
wine *(sharāb),* and sweetmeats *(shīrīnī)* are here:
It would be a rare boon, if on such a night
you were to meet your friends.
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 380:1, KSSS p.332; cf. TOS p.506

See **shahīd** (▸3), **shāhid** (7.1).

1. *Qurʾān* 5:117.

sharāb-khānah (P) *Lit.* house *(khānah)* of wine *(sharāb);* winehouse, tavern; the inner sanctum where the soul meets and unites with the spiritual master; the inner heart of a master who has realized God; the place where the wayfarer must go to receive the wine of divine bliss, love, and realization; said by some of the Sufi systematizers to represent either the angelic world *(ʿālam-i malakūt)*[1] or absolute Being.[2]

Ḥāfiẓ longs for the spiritual maturity that arises from access to this inner sanctuary:

From the thought that I might mature,
I have not slept for many nights.

I have the winesickness *(khumār)* of a hundred nights:
show me the way to the winehouse *(sharāb-khānah).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.21, DIH p.64; cf. DHWC (109:6) p.230

See also: **may-khānah**, **sharāb** (▸4).

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.81; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.447.
2. *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.210.

spiritual form See **astral form**.

spouse See **bride** (▸4), **bridegroom**.

supernaturally produced body (S. *nirmāṇa-kāya,* T. *sprul pa,* C. *huàshēn,* J. *ōjin, keshin*) A human form of a *buddha, bodhisattva* or other spiritually advanced being, produced by the exercise of their supernatural powers; a phantom replica of the human form, characteristically appearing at a distance from its producer, that can communicate with human beings in the normal manner, but has no lasting material reality; an artificial body that has all the appearances of a real body, produced for some particular purpose for the benefit of other living beings; a supernaturally produced *buddha* or *bodhisattva.*

The notion is particularly associated with *yoga,* tantrism, and Tibetan Buddhism. In these traditions, a supernaturally produced body is known as a *nirmāṇa-kāya* or *sprul pa* (created body). The concept of such a body is present in the *Mahābhārata:* "O bull of Bharata, having obtained power *(bala),* the (follower of) *yoga* should fashion for himself many thousands (of bodies), and he should roam the earth with all of them."[1] Because the Buddha was perceived as a great yogi with supernatural powers, he was also understood to be able to fly in the air and to manifest a supernaturally produced body or seemingly physical counterpart of himself at will, if he wanted to appear before someone at a distance from his actual physical location.[2]

This is different, however, from the *nirmāṇa-kāya* that appears in the *Mahāyāna* concept of the *trikāya* (having three bodies), where the term refers only to the actual humanly incarnated form of a *buddha.*

Supernaturally produced *buddhas, bodhisattvas,* monks, palaces, towers and many other such things make their appearance in a number of *Mahāyāna* texts. In the *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra,* the Buddha explains to Ānanda, one of his foremost disciples, that if a person is totally dedicated to the celestial *buddha* Amitāyus Buddha (Amitābha) during his lifetime, then Amitāyus

Buddha will himself come and meet that person at the time of his death. If, on the other hand, a person dedicates himself to Amitāyus Buddha, but does not really practice in the way he should, then Amitāyus Buddha will send a supernaturally produced replica of himself to meet that person when he dies. To cultivate *bodhichitta* (wisdom-mind) is to encourage and inculcate a desire for enlightenment:

> Ānanda, if a person . . . cultivates *bodhichitta* and one-pointedly remembers Amitāyus Buddha, constantly planting roots of goodness *(shàngēn,* S. *kushala-mūla)* within himself, desiring only to be reborn in his *buddha*-land, then, at the time of death, Amitāyus Buddha will manifest before him, accompanied by a multitude of monks. Then he will immediately follow the *tathāgata* to be born in that land, and attain the state of never turning back *(avaivartika)* from the path to supreme enlightenment.
>
> Therefore, Ānanda, if good men and women desire to be born in the land of ultimate bliss and to see Amitāyus Buddha, then they must cultivate supreme *bodhichitta,* focus their minds on the land of ultimate bliss, accumulate roots of goodness and dedicate the merits that accrue, as they have been taught. Then they will see that *buddha,* be born in that land, and will attain the state of never turning back *(avaivartika)* from the path to supreme enlightenment.
>
> Ānanda, imagine that a person . . . cultivates *bodhichitta* and dedicates his merits to being reborn in the land of Amitāyus Buddha, yet does not one-pointedly remember Amitāyus Buddha, nor plant numerous roots of goodness within himself. Then, at the time of death, Amitāyus Buddha will send a supernaturally produced *buddha (huàshēn,* S. *nirmāṇa-kāya)* to him, accompanied by a multitude of monks. The supernaturally produced *buddha (huà fó,* S. *nirmāṇa-buddha),* who is identical to the real *buddha* in radiance and auspicious marks, will manifest to the dying person, and will receive and guide him. And that person will immediately follow the supernaturally produced *buddha (huà fó),* to be reborn in his land and to attain the state of never turning back *(avaivartika)* from the path to supreme enlightenment.
>
> *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 5, T11 310:97c27–98a11*

Although a distinction is being made between the actual Amitāyus and a projected form, the nature of the celestial realms is such that there may be little difference between them. Both will be emanations or projections of the higher Reality, the *dharmakāya.*

In the same *sūtra,* the Bodhisattva Mañjushrī uses his powers of mental concentration to produce many wonders, including numerous supernaturally produced *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas:*

> Then, by his miraculous powers *(shénlì),* the great Bodhisattva Mañjushrī manifested thirty-two, multistorey, bejewelled palaces, endowed with imperial carriages. They were arranged in a square, facing the four directions, with pillars at each of the four corners. Filled with treasures and surrounded by railings, the palaces looked wondrously resplendent.... Inside the palaces were magnificent couches, covered with exquisite bejewelled fabrics, and on each couch sat a supernaturally produced *(huà) bodhisattva,* each bearing the thirty-two auspicious marks of a great man.
>
> Having manifested these magnificent things, Mañjushrī joined the Buddha, together with the supernaturally produced *(huà) buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* sitting on their lotus seats in the bejewelled palaces.... Having circled the Buddha and his monks seven times, they all rose into the air and illuminated the assembly at the *Dharma* site, radiating brilliant light all around, on all four sides.
>
> *Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra 36, T11 310:578a5–14*

See also: **manomaya-kāya**.

1. *Mahābhārata* 12:289.26, in *EDYF* p.238. Though *EDYF* is normally reliable, it has not been possible to locate this passage at the reference provided or elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata.*
2. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.77–78, *TBLD* (87) pp.104–5.

ṣūrat (P) *Lit.* form, shape; colloquially, face; in Sufi poetry, the inner vision of the divine beloved; the vision of the radiant spiritual form of the *shaykh* or master; also, appearance, when contrasted with *Maʿná* (Reality). Rūmī, speaking of his own *shaykh* Shams-i Tabrīz, writes of the beauty of the inner form and exhorts his reader to seek it at all costs:

> The beauty of the unseen form *(ṣūrat-i ghayb)*
> is beyond description –
> Borrow a thousand illuminated eyes, borrow!
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1734:18189, KSD4 p.65, in SPL p.263*

> Rub your eyes, and behold the image of the heart *(ṣūrat-i dil),*
> the image of the heart *(ṣūrat-i dil).*
> *Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1335:14126, KSD3 p.147; cf. MP1 (166:9) p.138*

Concerning himself, Rūmī relates that since the inner form became his constant companion, he has no longer dwelt in the body, but in the inner heavens:

His form *(ṣūrat)* has not left and will not leave my heart –
there has never been and never will be anyone equal to or like Him.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 2141:22676, KSD5 p.18, in SPL p.263

From the time your form *(ṣūrat)* became my heart's companion,
I have no longer dwelt on earth, but in the heavens.
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 1566:16448, KSD3 p.273; cf. in SPL p.263

Once the fire of love is established in the heart, the lover desires nothing more than to go on gazing at the inner beloved:

His image *(khayāl)* has become the companion of fiery lovers –
may your form *(ṣūrat)* never for an instant
be absent from before our eyes!
Rūmī, Dīvān-i Shams-i Tabrīz 5:62, KSD1 p.7; cf. in SPL p.263

Saʿdī also writes of the helplessness of his love for the beloved's inner form:

For long have I been nurturing your love in my mind,
and I would rather part with my life than with your love. . . .
My friends reproach me,
saying that I could not have been in my senses
to let my experienced feet sink into this morass.
But of what use are the eyes in a person's head,
or the soul in his body,
if they do not contemplate your soul-solacing form *(ṣūrat)*. . . .

Last night, I saw the beloved in a vision, saying to me:
"O Saʿdī! Lend not your ears to the words of your enemies.
For you will only become a true lover of my face *(dīdār),*
when you are indifferent to the here and hereafter."
Saʿdī, Badāyiʿ 37:4, 6–7, 10–11, KSSS p.354; cf. BOS p.41

See also: **chihrah**, **dīdār**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭalʿah**.

svābhāvika-kāya (S) *Lit.* body *(kāya)* of one's own nature *(svābhāvika);* essential, natural, or innate body; Essence body; a fourth body controversially introduced into the *Mahāyāna trikāya* (having three bodies) concept by the late-eighth-century North Indian monk Haribhadra, who maintained that the *svābhāvika-kāya* signifies all three bodies understood as a single integrated whole. Most other *Mahāyāna* schools considered *svābhāvika-kāya* to be synonymous with the *dharmakāya* (Truth body, Reality body). Haribhadra's

teaching found its way into Tibetan *Vajrayāna* (tantric) Buddhism, where it received further elaboration. In the *Geluk* school, the *dharmakāya* is said to possess two aspects: the *svābhāvika-kāya* and *jñāna-kāya* (wisdom body, body of gnosis).

See also: **trikāya**.

svarūpa (S), **swarūp** (H), **sarūp** (Pu) *Lit.* innate *(sva)* form *(rūp);* inherent nature, own form, essence; the natural, true, actual, intrinsic, essential or real form or nature of something; one's own true nature – the immortal soul; hence also, the inner or spiritual form of a master. Baba Jaimal Singh, for example, writes to his successor-to-be Maharaj Sawan Singh during the days of the latter's discipleship:

> You are not separate from my own *sarūp.* It is a wonderful thing, but it cannot be made clear except with the help of a perfect master. You appear to have another form only for the purposes of carrying on your worldly duties.
>
> *Baba Jaimal Singh, Spiritual Letters 35, SLO p.52*

> To be attached to the *Shabd* (Word) inside and to have *satguru*'s *sarūp* is the same thing as being in his presence.
>
> *Baba Jaimal Singh, Spiritual Letters 4, SLO p.19*

Sarūp refers also to the soul, one's own true inner being, which is a part of the divine Word or *Shabd:*

> Keep on doing your *bhajan* and *simran* (meditation) every day, that is, hold on to the *Shabd dhun,* which is our real form *(sarūp).*
>
> *Baba Jaimal Singh, Spiritual Letters 13, SL p.23*

In *Vedānta,* the true nature *(svarūpa)* of the soul is said to be *sat-chit-ānanda* (being-consciousness-bliss):

> Realizing your own nature *(svarūpa)* to be unending bliss, shake off the delusion created by your own mind and, becoming liberated and enlightened, attain your ultimate purpose. . . .
>
> For one who has realized his own nature *(svarūpa)* and drinks the undiluted bliss of the self *(ātman),* there is nothing more exhilarating than the stillness arising from the state of desirelessness.
>
> *Shankara, Vivekachūḍāmaṇi 472, 527; cf. VCSM pp.176, 196*

See also: **nija-rūpa**, **Shabd guru**.

ṭalʿah (A), **ṭalʿat** (P) *Lit.* appearance, aspect, guise; face, countenance; the radiant or shining face or countenance of the divine beloved within; the manifested radiance of the divine Beauty; the radiant form of the divine beloved; the inner spiritual form of the *shaykh, murshid,* or master.

The lover prays for the inner purity that will enable him to see this radiant inner form:

> With your glance, grant purity to the mirror of my heart
> that within it I might see your heart-opening radiant face *(ṭalʿat).*
> *ʿIrāqī, Kullīyāt 3665, KHI p.262; cf. in SSE2 p.97*

Though the Sufis used the language of worldly love, their meaning was of the divine beloved:

> The beloved is not one
> with beautiful hair and a slender waist;
> Be the slave of that radiant face *(ṭalʿat)*
> which has the mystery of (divine) Beauty.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.92, DIH p.180; cf. DHWC (147:1) p.295, in SSE2 p.32*

Even the radiance of the moon, regarded as the height of great physical beauty, pales by comparison:

> Even the moon could never imitate
> the glowing of your radiant face *(ṭalʿat):*
> Before a flower like you all plants lack beauty.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.84, DIH p.167; cf. DHWC (171:1) p.328*

The lovers pass their nights in contemplation, longing for a glimpse of that divine face, which – once experienced – only feeds the longing:

> O beloved, the night time
> ends with the first gleam of dawn.
> If you desire an earlier morn, then show your face.
> For should you reveal your sunlike countenance *(ṭalʿat)* at night,
> people would probably think the day had dawned. . . .
>
> You made a promise that you would spend
> one night in my company;
> But since then the nights have exceeded all calculation,
> and the days have passed all reckoning.
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 202:2–3, 8, KSSS p.289; cf. TOS pp.275–76*

See also: **chihrah**, **dīdār**, **liqāʾ**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**.

transfiguration The change in Jesus' appearance as witnessed by three of his disciples; the gospel account of Jesus' transformation into a different and more sublime form; also known as his glorification.

From a mystical perspective, the 'incident' is perhaps an externalized account of an inner experience of a meeting with the radiant, spiritual, or light form of Jesus. On the other hand, it is also true that spiritually advanced disciples can see the divine light shining within the physical form of their master; and from time to time, in order to increase their faith and love, a master may also allow others a glimpse of this radiance. Either way, the radiance is not perceived with the physical eyes, but with the spiritual eyes.

One of the commonest terms used for the inner heavens in biblical through to early Christian times was 'mountains'. God Himself was even said to reside on the 'holy mount'. Such metaphors are found extensively in the Hebrew Bible, particularly the *Psalms.*[1] Many centuries later, the metaphor was still in active use, for the Jewish scriptures were well-known to people in the time of Jesus, just as they are today. Consequently, there are many places in early Christian texts where mountains refer to the heavenly regions. This makes it easier to understand the descriptions of Jesus' supposed transfiguration on "a high mountain". The incident is recorded in *Mark,* and copied by *Luke* and *Matthew:*

> And after six days, Jesus took with him Peter, and James, and John, and led them up into a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured *(metemorphōthē)* before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, such as no fuller on earth could whiten them.
>
> *Mark 9:2–3; cf. KJV*

The "high mountain" is almost certainly the inner heavens, where the "raiment" or body of every soul is bright and shining. The form of a master in these realms is bright, pure, beautiful, and radiant beyond comparison. The compiler of Mark's gospel was probably unaware of what he was writing about, hence the story as he heard it has remained somewhat garbled. According to *Mark,* Jesus then meets and converses with Moses and Isaiah, following which:

> There was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying: "This is my beloved Son: hear him." And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen.
>
> *Mark 9:7–9, KJV*

The story also records that the disciples are requested not to disclose their experience to others, another characteristic of mystic teachings. The transfiguration stories in the synoptic gospels are all derived from the account in *Mark.* Variants in other apocryphal texts, however, are specifically mystical. In the *Acts of Peter,* Peter says:

> Our Lord, willing that I should behold his majesty in the holy mount, . . . I . . . saw the brightness of his light, fell as one dead and shut my eyes, and heard such a Voice from him as I am not able to describe, and thought myself to be blinded by his brightness. . . . And he gave me his hand and raised me up. And when I arose, I saw him again in such a form as I was able to take in.
>
> *Acts of Peter 3:20; cf. ANT p.321*

When the soul goes within and meets with the light form of the master in the inner heavens (the "holy mount"), then the attention becomes entirely focused within. The eyes are shut and the "Voice" of the divine Music is heard. The individual goes through the process of dying while living. Hence, the writer says, "I . . . fell as one dead and shut my eyes." There is no doubt that an inner experience is being described. Later on, the soul returns to the body and Peter once again sees his master in his physical form, "in such a form as I was able to take in".

In the *Acts of John,* the story is again related, where once more the events described make better sense if understood as the literalization of a mystic experience. According to the story, the disciple John recalls:

> And at another time, he took me and James and Peter with him to the mountain where he used to pray. And we beheld a light in him, such as it is not possible for a man who uses mortal speech to describe what it was like.
>
> Again, in a similar manner, he took us three up into the mountain, saying: "Come with me." . . . And we went again and saw him at a distance praying. And I . . . drew close to him softly, so that he should not see me, and I stood looking at his back. And I saw that he was not in any way clad with garments, but was naked, but not in any way like a man: his feet were whiter than any snow, so that the earth there was lit up by his feet, and that his head touched the heaven.
>
> *Acts of John 90; cf. ANT pp.251–52*

By "prayer" is meant mystic prayer or meditation. It is through this practice that the soul ascends. As John relates, the soul is taken up to the inner heavens – "he took us three up into the mountain." The "garments" of this world refer to the body, while being "naked" means that the soul had become free of the body.

Mainstream Christianity has generally taken the story somewhat literally. The *Macarian Homilies,* for instance, speak not only of the transfiguration or glorification of the body of Jesus, but also of his followers on the Day of Resurrection.[2] Paul, too, maintains that on the Last Day, "we shall all be changed", when the mortal body is raised from the grave and becomes immortal.[3] An unlikely scenario!

See also: **glorification** (▸4), **holy mount** (2.1), **mountains** (4.1).

1. *E.g. Psalms* 3:4, 11:1, 15:1, 48:1, 87:1, *passim, KJV.*
2. *Macarian Homilies* 15, *SHME* p.125.
3. *1 Corinthians* 15:51–53, *KJV.*

trikāya (S), **sku gsum** (T), **sānshēn** (C), **sanshin** (J) *Lit.* having three *(tri, gsum, sān, san)* bodies *(kāya, sku, shēn, shin);* a *Mahāyāna* Buddhist doctrine concerning a *buddha'*s manifestation in three bodies, aspects, or expressions. Like the English word 'body', *kāya* also has a wider connotation than its primary meaning, and is also used to mean a collection or assemblage.[1]

According to the doctrine, the essential reality or inner being of a *buddha* is his cosmic, transcendental *dharmakāya* (*dharma* body, Truth body), which is identical with absolute Reality or eternal Perfection. It is formless, unchanging, synonymous with Suchness or Emptiness *(Shūnyatā),* beyond all conceptualizing, and hence incomprehensible to the human intellect. It is free from all impurities. It is the one Reality out of which all *buddhas* emerge and, having fulfilled their purpose, return. In fact, it is not a 'body' at all, in the way the term is humanly understood. The *dharmakāya* is eternity, radiance, harmony, purity, enjoyment, and the essence of enlightenment – without beginning or end, beyond duality.

From this *dharma* body is manifested or emanated a *buddha'*s *sambhoga-kāya* (body of enjoyment, body of delight), an extremely subtle and sublime, blissful and celestial body by which a *buddha* participates in existence in the celestial or heavenly realms, which are known as the pure lands or *buddha*-lands, and which are numbered in the millions of billions by *Mahāyāna sūtras.* The *sambhoga-kāya* is the body in which the celestial *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* of the *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* traditions have their being, and in which they teach the *Dharma* to the heavenly host of *devas* (deities) and a multitude of other celestial beings. *Bhoga* also means fruition or reward, and *sambhoga-kāya* is also translated as the 'reward body' because these heavenly realms are the *bodhisattva'*s reward for the merit earned by good deeds and spiritual practice in past lives.

The *sambhoga-kāya* is also the form of a *buddha* or *bodhisattva* or of the *Dharma* that is met with in inner visions and deep meditation. The

sambhoga-kāya of *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* is described in the *sūtras* as emanating vast light, that spreads throughout the *buddha*-lands. The magnificent iconographic representations of the celestial *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* in Buddhist art, with their stereotyped colours and symbolic appurtenances, are an attempt to convey the imagined glory of the celestial *sambhoga-kāya* in human terms.

Out of his deep compassion *(mahākaruṇa)* and love for the suffering of beings in the material realm, a *buddha* takes birth in the normal human manner, manifesting himself in the third of the three bodies – as a human being in a human body, such as Gautama Buddha, the historical Buddha. This is known as the *nirmāṇa-kāya* (created body, emanated body), which exists in material time and space. The essential, inner Reality of a humanly incarnated *buddha* always remains that of the *dharmakāya,* but since this would be beyond the comprehension of human beings and would only frighten and alarm them were he to manifest himself in his real glory, he disguises himself in human form and comes to their level, where he interacts with them in the normal human manner.

Although *trikāya* is essentially a *Mahāyāna* teaching, its essential elements are present in early Buddhist texts. Indeed, it seems that the *Mahāyāna* doctrine developed out of a need to clarify the often confusing use of terms for the various manifestations of the Buddha. It may be added that this only served somewhat predictably as a basis for further speculation and interpretation, only the broad outlines of which are covered here.

The Pali term *dhammakāya* (body of Truth, embodiment of Truth) was current even during the Buddha's lifetime. In the *Aggañña Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya,* the Buddha tells the *brāhmaṇ* Vāseṭṭha that the *tathāgata* is known as the body of *Dhamma (dhammakāya),* the manifestation of *Dhamma (dhammabhūta),* the body of *Brahma (brahmakāya),* and the manifestation of *Brahma (brahmabhūta).*[2] He is implying that the *Dhamma* is equivalent to the *Brahman* or *Brahma* of the *Upanishads.*

In the *Vakkali Sutta,* Vakkali – at some length – admits his unworthiness to the Buddha, and the Buddha comforts him, saying, "Enough, Vakkali. What is there to see in this vile body? Whoever sees the *Dhamma* sees me; whoever sees me sees the *Dhamma.*" Vakkali then goes on to acknowledge that the human form of the Buddha is "impermanent".[3]

Because the Buddha was perceived as a great yogi with supernatural powers, it was also believed that he could fly in the air and manifest at will a supernaturally produced body (*manomaya-kāya,* body made by mind, mind-made body) – a seemingly physical counterpart of himself – if he wanted to appear before someone at a distance from his actual physical location.[4] The *Divyāvadāna,* a collection of early Buddhist legends, tells the tale of how the Buddha once created multiple mind-made bodies that filled the sky; and it was in a *manomaya-kāya,* so Buddhist stories say, that he visited his deceased mother in *tāvatiṃsa devaloka* ('heaven of the thirty-three deities').[5]

Texts such as the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* explain, in chapters devoted to supernormal powers, that it is in a body made of mind *(manomaya)* that a *buddha* and other advanced beings are able to travel in the heavenly realms such as the heaven of *Brahmā.* In a description of the ten kinds of *iddhi* (supernormal power), the *Visuddhimagga* also describes a *manomaya* body as a "body inside a body", like the pith inside the sheath of a reed.[6]

Yogic texts speak of the *manomaya-kosha* (sheath made of mind, *manas*), one of the five coverings over the *ātman* (self, soul). The *manomaya-kosha* is the second of the subtle coverings, more subtle than that of *prāṇa* (subtle life energy). It consists of the mind, which is said to have the shape of a human being since it pervades the material body. In the Buddhist context, *manomaya* seems to be understood as both 'made *of* mind' and 'made *by* mind'. There is a difference between the two. A supernaturally produced body is 'made *by* mind', but the body in which a mystic enters the inner heavens is 'made *of* mind', since the inner heavens are essentially regions of the higher mind. It seems that writers, both ancient and modern, understanding things largely from a conceptual viewpoint, have a tendency to confuse the two. In the sense of being a body 'made *of* mind', the *manomaya-kāya* is the conceptual prototype of the *sambhoga-kāya.*

In *yoga,* tantrism and early Buddhism, a temporary and supernaturally produced manifestation is known, confusingly, as a *nirmāṇa-kāya.* All these forms or bodies are manifested forms of the Buddha's *dharmakāya* and were known collectively as *rūpakāya* (form bodies). In the systematized *Mahāyāna* doctrine, the human body became known as the *nirmāṇa-kāya* and the 'body made of mind' became the *sambhoga-kāya.* Such ideas concerning the various manifestations of the Buddha, which have their parallels in other spiritual traditions, are generally accepted by all Buddhist schools.

Some centuries after the Buddha's death, these early elements of understanding regarding the Buddha's being and powers were developed by the *Sarvāstivāda* branch of early Buddhism into a doctrine later elaborated and systematized by the *Mahāyāna* tradition into the *trikāya* teaching. The first full presentation of the *Mahāyāna trikāya* doctrine is probably in the first-century (CE) *Ashṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* ('Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Verses'), where the term *sambhoga-kāya* is introduced. The doctrine was more fully elaborated and systematized around 300 CE by the *Yogāchāra* school of Buddhism.

There are some differences between the ways in which the various *Mahāyāna* schools have interpreted the *trikāya,*[7] although these developments are largely conceptual and analytical, rather than bearing much relationship to experience. Such diverse opinions and descriptions of the three bodies and their interrelationships reflect the attempt of the human mind to make sense of something that lie beyond the sphere of the human intellect.

In Pure Land Buddhism, the *sambhoga-kāya* is understood as the reward *(bhoga)* body, in which a *bodhisattva* completes his journey to perfection and becomes a *buddha.* The forms of celestial *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* that dwell in the *buddha*-lands, such as Amitābha and Mañjushrī, are hence understood to be *sambhoga-kāyas,* although in some contexts Amitābha, along with Vairochana, are identified with the *dharmakāya.*

It is general Buddhist philosophy that every living being has the potential to become a *buddha.* Hence, the Chinese *Chán* master Línjì Yìxuán (*d.*866) observes that everyone has the potential to manifest the *dharmakāya* within themselves. Indeed, all three bodies are a part of every human being, at all times, whether or not they are aware of it:

> Do you wish to be no different from the *buddhas* and patriarchs? Then just do not look for anything outside. The pure light of your own heart at this instant is the *dharmakāya buddha* in your own house. The non-differentiating light of your heart at this instant is the *sambhoga-kāya buddha* in your own house. The non-discriminating light of your own heart at this instant is the *nirmāṇa-kāya buddha* in your own house. This trinity of the Buddha's body is none other than he, here before your eyes, listening to my expounding the *Dharma.*
>
> *Línjì Yìxuán, Línjì lù, T47 1985:497b17–21; cf. ZTRR p.18*

The *Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sūtra (Liùzǔ tánjīng),* a composite Chinese text of which the various components were written between the eighth and thirteenth centuries, says the same, but in a more expansive manner. Here, the "self-nature" is the essential being or true nature of every person:

> Listen carefully while I explain to you the three bodies *(sānshēn)* of a single substance, the self-nature of the *buddha,* so that you may see the three bodies and become completely enlightened to your own self-nature. . . .
>
> The form-body *(sèshēn)* is an inn; it cannot be returned to. The three bodies of the *buddha* exist within the self-nature of worldly people; but, because they are confused, they do not see the nature within themselves, and so seek the three bodies of the *tathāgata* outside themselves. They do not see that the three bodies of the *buddha* are within their own bodies.
>
> Listen to what I say, for it can cause you to see the three bodies of your own self-nature within your own body. The three bodies of the *buddha* arise from your own self-nature, and are not obtained from outside.
>
> What is the clear, pure *dharma* body *buddha?* The worldly person's nature is basically clear and pure, and the ten thousand *dharmas* are produced from it. The thought of evil produces evil actions and the

> thought of good produces good actions. Thus all *dharmas* exist within the self-nature. This is like the sky which is always clear, and the sun and moon which are always bright, so that if they are obscured by floating clouds, it is bright above the clouds and dark below them. But if the wind suddenly blows and scatters the clouds, there is brightness above and below, and the myriad forms appear. The worldly person's nature constantly drifts like those clouds in the sky.
>
> Intelligence is like the sun and wisdom is like the moon. Intelligence and wisdom are constantly bright, but if you are attached to external states, the floating clouds of false thought cover the self-nature so that it cannot shine.
>
> If you meet a spiritual friend *(shànzhīshi),* if you listen to the true and right *Dharma* and cast out your own confusion and falseness, then inside and out there will be penetrating brightness, and within the self-nature all the ten thousand *dharmas* will appear. That is how it is with those who see their own nature. It is called the clear, pure *dharma* body of the *buddha.*...
>
> The skin and flesh of the physical body are like an inn to which you cannot return. Simply awaken to the three bodies of your self-nature, and you will understand the self-nature *buddha.*
>
> *Liùzǔ tánjīng 6, T48 2008:354b13–c2, c23–24; cf. SPDS pp.242–44, 252*

The late-eighth-century North Indian *Mahāyāna* monk Haribhadra controversially introduced the concept of a fourth 'body', the *svābhāvika-kāya* (essential body, Essence body, body comprised of one's own innate nature or self-nature), which he maintained includes all three bodies understood as a single integrated whole. Most other *Mahāyāna* schools considered *svābhāvika-kāya* to be synonymous with *dharmakāya.* Haribhadra's teaching found its way into Tibetan *Vajrayāna* (tantric) Buddhism, where it received further elaboration. In the *Geluk* school, the *dharmakāya* is said to possess two aspects: the *svābhāvika-kāya* and *jñāna-kāya* (wisdom body, body of gnosis). *Vajrayāna* also links the three bodies to the three sources of action – body, speech, and mind. In this correspondence, the body aspect of a *buddha* is linked to the *nirmāṇa-kāya,* his speech to the *sambhoga-kāya,* and his mind to the *dharmakāya.*

The Tibetan *Dzogchen* and the similar *Mahāmudrā* traditions interpret the *dharmakāya* as the clear, timeless, primordial, all-encompassing and intrinsically natural state of consciousness of a mind that is empty of all identity. This supreme state of Emptiness or Void *(Shūnyatā)* has the capacity to manifest as a luminous form (the *sambhoga-kāya*), while the *nirmāṇa-kāya* is regarded as the form in which sentient beings in the physical world are taught the meaning of a spiritual life.

In tantrism, the *ḍākinīs* of Indian and Tibetan mythology – female tantric deities, regarded as embodiments of enlightened energy – are also categorized

as three types, related to the *trikāya.* The *ḍākinī Samantabhadrī* represents the *dharmadhātu* (essential element of existence), within which everything has its being. *Sambhoga-kāya ḍākinīs* are used as a focus in tantric meditation, and *nirmāṇa-kāya ḍākinīs* are a category of human beings – women born with special spiritual potential as *yoginīs* and the companions of *gurus.*

See also: **svābhāvika-kāya**.

1. This entry repeats, draws together, and then expands upon much of what is also found in **dharmakāya**, **manomaya-kāya**, **nirmāṇa-kāya**, **sambhoga-kāya**, **supernaturally produced body**, and **svābhāvika-kāya**.
2. *Dīgha Nikāya* 27, *Aggañña Sutta, PTSD3* p.84.
3. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 22:87, *Vakkali Sutta, PTSS3* pp.120–21; *cf. CDBB* p.939.
4. *Dīgha Nikāya* 2, *Sāmaññaphala Sutta, PTSD1* pp.77–78, *TBLD* (87) pp.104–5.
5. *E.g. Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā* 14:2, *PTSDA3* pp.199–230, *DCBP* pp.117–118, *BLD3* pp.35–56.
6. Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga* 12:25, 12:119, 136–39, *PTSV* pp.379, 402, 405–6, *PPVM* pp.374, 394–99; *Paṭisambhidāmagga* 22, *PTSP2* pp.210–11, *PDPM* pp.381–82.
7. See "Trikaya," *Wikipedia,* ret. December 2013.

ṭurrah (A/P) (pl. A. *ṭurar,* P. *ṭirār*) *Lit.* forelock; the lock, curl, or ringlet of hair that hangs across the forehead; a waving ringlet, a dangling forelock, a tuft of curled or braided hair; also, the loose and hanging end of a turban, or anything twisted, such as a knotted handkerchief, a whip, *etc.;* also called the *ṭurrah-'i hindū* (black forelock); in Sufi imagery, a symbol of the divine beloved, meaning either God or the inner master, which captivates the heart of the lover with its radiance and beauty.

Once the inner beloved has been glimpsed, the lover thinks of nothing else:

> Do not ask Maghribī about his spiritual state:
> Last time we saw him,
> he seemed bewildered by those black curls *(ṭurrah-'i hinduvī).*
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 139:1350, DSMR p.173; cf. in SSE1 p.103*

> The downfall of lovers
> lies in your jet black forelock *(ṭurrah-'i shabrang);*
> Alas for the poor heart of the lover,
> who is caught in your clutches.
> *Sanā'ī, Dīvān 31, AMM p.809*

> Alas for the ascetics *(zāhid)* and the myriad devotees *('ābid)*
> whom your sly forelock *(ṭurrah)* has enticed
> from their cloisters to the winehouse.
>
> *Sanā'ī, Dīvān 381, AMM p.1027; cf. in SSE1 p.102*

> My heart would pursue comfort,
> if only his bold glance and deceptive forelock *(ṭurrah)*
> would permit me.
>
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.131, DIH p.233; cf. DHWC (283:6) p.498*

See also: **gīsū** (▸4), **ja'dah**, **mū**, **zulf**.

twin (Gk. *syzygos, lit.* yoked together; Syriac, *taumā;* A. *al-taw'am;* Coptic, *saish;* Parthian, *yamag;* Middle Persian, *narĵamīg*) A term said to have been used by the third-century Iranian mystic, Mānī. The various terms are also translated as 'companion', 'pair-companion', 'counterpart', and 'familiar'.

According to the account related in the western areas of his ministry, Mānī, who had been raised in a gnostic Judaeo-Christian Elkasite community, claimed to have received a revelation of all he taught from a heavenly twin, of which he was the earthly counterpart. In Coptic texts, the twin was also called the paraclete (Gk. *paraklētos*), *i.e.* the Holy Spirit, and is said to be the paraclete promised in John's gospel.[1]

In the Coptic *Kephalaia,* the paraclete is described as Mānī's heavenly counterpart or higher self, from which he derived all his understanding.[2] In essence, this means the Holy Spirit or *Nous,* the creative power – the real form of a master, which manifests inwardly to the ascending disciple as a radiant being of light. In a Middle Persian text, Mānī portrays the twin as his strength and inspiration:

> And even now, he himself accompanies me, and he himself keeps and protects me, and with his strength I fight with *Az* (the demon of desire) and *Ahriman* (the devil). And I teach men wisdom and knowledge, and I save them from *Az* and *Ahriman.*... Through the twin,... I stood before my own family; and I was inspired by the gods, and I began to speak and to teach what the twin had taught me; and when they heard it, they were astonished.
>
> *Manichaean Text, RMP b; cf. ML p.10*

The notion of what lies below – in the hierarchy of creation – having its pattern, archetype, counterpart or twin at a higher level runs throughout gnostic teachings. Moreover, the idea of a heavenly twin is present in some

pre-Manichaean gnosticism.[3] Mānī's explanation, therefore, would have been familiar to many of his hearers.

According to an excerpt from the Valentinian gnostic Theodotus, preserved by Clement of Alexandria, the *Logos* or divine Word was also known as the companion.[4] In the allegorical story of the *Acts of Thomas,* Judas Thomas is also said to have been the twin-brother of Jesus, an association that is used throughout the book in a metaphorical manner. 'Twin' also suggests an image or likeness, terms also used for the spiritual form of the master. For this reason, the light form has sometimes been called the astral double of the master, since it resembles his physical form in appearance.

The Manichaean psalm book in Coptic speaks of the paraclete, as well as the "blessed familiar", the "beloved familiar",[5] the "light-familiar",[6] and

> twin of the perfect one,
> familiar of the wise one,
> father of the *Nous* of light.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book, MPB p.166*

Here, it should be noted, it is the devotee who is seeing the "familiar" – not only Mānī. Another the Coptic texts is even more explicit. The devotee sees the "familiar" spiritually, "with my eyes of light". It is identified with "my glorious father" (the radiant master), who waits at the door or "gate" of the body to take the soul to its heavenly home (the "Height"). Upon receiving this vision, the soul immediately wishes to be relieved forever of the physical body (the "image of flesh" and the "vesture of manhood"):

> I was gazing at my familiar with my eyes of light,
> beholding my glorious father,
> he who is always waiting for me,
> opening before me the gate to the Height.
> I spread out my hands, praying to him;
> I bent my knees, worshipping him also,
> that I might divest myself of the image of the flesh,
> and put off the vesture of manhood.
> *Manichaean Psalm Book CCXXVI; cf. MPB p.19, GVM pp.25–26*

Another text, in Middle Persian, reiterates Mānī's statement of the "light-twin" as his companion and helper:

> We worship . . . the light-twin who was your companion
> and your helper in every battle.
> *Manichaean Text, MBB p.18ff.; cf. GSR p.137, ML p.66*

Even earlier sources can be identified. The prevalent religion of Iran at the time of Mānī was Zoroastrianism, and the metaphor of the creative power as the pair-companion or familiar has a precedent in the teachings of Zarathushtra – someone whom Mānī taught was a saviour of the same rank as himself. In Zarathushtra's *Gāthās, Vohu Manah* is depicted as man's close companion or familiar, as is the Great *Vahman* or *Nous* of Mānī's teachings.[7]

A similar term is also found in the pre-Manichaean Mandaean literature, where it is translated as "counterpart". The "counterpart" or "image of Life" is sent as an emanation of "Great Life", which is God, to awaken souls slumbering in this world. This is the role of a saviour, whose essence is the divine Word or creative power, and who manifests as a human being in the material world, and as a radiant being of light in the heavenly worlds:

> Arise, O sleepers who lie there,
> rise up, O stumblers who have stumbled.
> Arise, worship and praise the Great Life
> and praise His counterpart that is the image of Life,
> which shines forth and is expressed in sublime light.
>
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 114; cf. CPM p.111*

As in the opening verses of John's gospel,[8] this divine Word is said to have existed with God before the beginning of creation:

> You are the counterpart of Life,
> for you were in existence before everything.
> You are the Vine....
> When the worlds came into being
> and creations were called forth,
> you held the worlds and generations in your grasp.
> You have laid down a path for sincere and believing men
> to the place of life.
>
> *Mandaean Prayer Book 35; cf. CPM p.36*

In other instances, the counterpart is more obviously the radiant form of the saviour. Here, the soul ascends from bodily captivity:

> I go forth towards my counterpart,
> and my counterpart comes towards me.
> He fondles and embraces me,
> because I have come from captivity.
>
> *Thousand and Twelve Questions II:125; cf. TTQ p.235*

See also: **paraclete**.

1. *John* 14:16–18, 26; 15:26; 16:7.
2. *Kephalaia* 14–15.
3. See E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha, NTA2* p.441; *Gospel of Philip* 57–58, *GS* p.334, *NHS20* pp.154–57.
4. *Excerpts from Theodotus, ETCA* pp.44–45.
5. *Manichaean Psalm Book, MPB* p.139.
6. *Manichaean Psalm Book* CCXLI, *MPB* p.42.
7. See **Vohu Manah** (3.1).
8. *John* 1:1–3.

visions of a master (in Daoism) See **xiàn**.

wajh (A) *Lit.* face, countenance, visage; mystically and metaphorically, the face of God, as in the Quranic assertions, "Everything is perishing except His face *(wajh)*"[1] and "Wherever you turn, there is the face *(wajh)* of God;"[2] hence, God Himself; equivalent to the Persian *rū.* In the *Qur'ān,* seekers of God are also called "those who seek the face of *Allāh*".[3] Probably because of its use in the *Qur'ān, wajh* is used almost exclusively for the divine Essence, while other equivalent Persian and Arabic terms for God are more commonly used for the manifested radiance of the divine Beauty within, the radiant form and appearance of the divine beloved.

See also: **chihrah**, **dīdār**, **liqā'**, **rū**, **rukh**, **ṣūrat**, **ṭal'ah**, **wajh** (2.1).

1. *Qur'ān* 28:88.
2. *E.g. Qur'ān* 2:115.
3. *Qur'ān* 13:22, 30:38.

xiàn, **chūxiàn**, **xiǎnchū** (C) *Lit.* to appear, to show up, to become visible, to manifest *(xiàn, chūxiàn);* to reveal, to show, to manifest *(xiǎnchū).*

Many stories are related in which living or deceased masters have manifested their spiritual form to others, whether or not they were disciples. There can be a number of reasons for such appearances, but they are always for the spiritual benefit of the recipient. Sometimes, they happened in a dream or inner vision; at other times, they were physical manifestations, with the master appearing in an apparently physical form when he was known or subsequently discovered to have been somewhere else:

> (Wáng Chóngyáng) sent out his spirit and entered (his disciples') dreams *(rùmèng)* with various kinds of changes *(biàn)* and manifestations

> *(xiàn)* – scaring them with (scenes of) purgatory, and inviting them with (scenes of) heaven.
>
> *Qín Zhì'ān, Jīnlián zhèngzōng jì 5:9a–b, TPEQ p.121*

Thirteenth-century Daoist master Wáng Chǔyī says that, before he himself became a master, he had more than one mystical encounter with physically absent masters. The second of the two encounters that he mentions was with his own master Wáng Zhé (*aka.* Chóngyáng):

> When I was in my seventh year, I encountered Dōnghuá Dìjūn. From out of nowhere, he exhorted me to not allow myself to become confused *(hūn)* and ignorant *(mèi).* In 1168, I again had an encounter *(yù),* this time with Shīfu Chóngyáng.
>
> *Wáng Chǔyī, Yúnguāng jí 4:1a; cf. TPEQ pp.101–2*

Thirteenth-century Daoist master Yǐn Zhìpíng reminisces about his nightly practice of sitting in meditation under a peach tree, when he was a disciple residing at a hermitage. During this time, he experienced a number of visions of his master Liú Chǔxuán (*aka.* Chángshēng). Yǐn Zhìpíng understands that his master is teaching him to relinquish all worldly attitudes and attachments. Furthermore, he feels that his master's bizarre and drastic actions are the reason for his own success in making the desired transformation from a worldly to a spiritual person:

> One night during the fourth watch (2–4 a.m.), a man suddenly came before me. He had the bones of the *Dào* and the wind of immortality (*i.e.* he bore the impressive appearance of an immortal); he was not a man of the dusty world *(chénshì).* He bore a golden radiance *(jīnguāng)* and jade-like lustre *(yùzé)* that together glowed forth.
>
> I took one look at him, and thereupon rectified my mind and made it motionless. I knew that he was *zhēnrén* (true man) Chángshēng. When he came before me, wielding a sword he cut off my head; still, my mind remained motionless. The master *(shī)* then cheerfully placed my head back on my body. When I came out of meditation, my mind had an enlightenment: I understood that the master had replaced my worldly head and visage.
>
> Ten days later, he came again and cut out my heart, and I understood that he had removed my worldly heart.
>
> Another ten days later, he again came, holding a plate of deep-fried cakes.
>
> He offered them all to me to eat, and I overate until I felt like I was going to die. The master *(shī)* then cut open my belly and emptied it

> of all its contents. The fact of the matter is that, by nature, I tend to put myself too high (*zìgāo,* am proud). When I put myself too high, I overindulge and consequently damage myself. Thus the master removed that which had been damaged in me.
>
> *Yǐn Zhìpíng, Qīnghé zhēnrén běiyóu yǔlù 2:16a–b; cf. TPEQ pp.97–98*

As a result of the latter visionary encounter with his master, Yǐn Zhìpíng learned that he still had work to do – to become humble and to avoid indulgence.

Appearances of deceased masters are particularly evident in *Quánzhēn* hagiographies. Many such incidents involve the school's founder, twelfth-century Daoist master Wáng Zhé (Chóngyáng):

> After the death of his exterior, Wáng Chóngyáng spoke of the profound *(xuán)* – and thus persuaded the mind of Old Man Zāng under the Jūnyī Bridge. By the Liújiǎng Gorge, he healed Mr Zhāng's disease by giving him medicine *(yào).* At times, he was seen dancing *(wǔdǎo)* by . . . the Kūnmíng Pond; and at times, he was seen singing and reciting poetry *(yínyǒng)* around Mount Zhōngnán. Several such incidents have occurred that prove that he (his spiritual form) did not die *(bùsǐ).*
>
> *Qín Zhì'ān, Jīnlián zhèngzōng jì 2:7a; cf. TPEQ p.123*

The same text describes a series of incidents that took place while four disciples – Mǎ Yù, Tán Chǔduān, Liú Chǔxuán, and Qiū Chùjī – were carrying the coffin containing the body of their deceased master Wáng Zhé to Liújiǎng, where it was to be reburied:

> At every place they went to on their journey, when they came to pay for their lodging and food, the innkeeper would be sure to say, "A Daoist monk came by and has already paid for everything." The disciples would do their utmost to pursue the Daoist monk, but were never able to find him.
>
> And when they asked the innkeeper to describe his appearance *(mào),* they would realize that it was the patriarch-master's *(zǔshī)* manifested body *(huàshēn).*
>
> *Qín Zhì'ān, Jīnlián zhèngzōng jì 2:7b; cf. TPEQ p.232 (n.31)*

In his writings, twelfth-century Daoist master Mǎ Yù describes a number of visions of the deceased Wáng Zhé (Chóngyáng) experienced by various people at different locations.[1] "Ascending *(shēng)* the mist (*xiá,* red clouds)" is a metaphor for dying:

> The true man of compassionate transformations *(zhēnrén mǐnhuà),* Shīfu Chóngyáng . . . went upwards ascending the mist, and later instructed Sir Zāng. At Qíyáng Town, he came down to the world wearing a cap. For me, he once again transmitted *(chuán)* merit *(gōng).* . . . West of the Huátíng city walls, he appeared and cured my miserable disease, and *qì* was distributed throughout my body. At Wéndēng, atop the clouds, he manifested (*xiǎnchū,* revealed) his compassionate countenance. The district magistrate Nípáng Hǔ saw him. After a while he again returned to the heavenly palace *(tiāngōng).*
>
> *Mǎ Yù, Dòngxuán jīnyù jí 10:15b–16a, TPEQ pp.123–24*

Here, Mǎ Yù also recalls a mystical encounter he himself experienced, when his master transmitted methods of cultivating inner spiritual realization ("transmitted merit").

See also: **mèngjiàn**, **shénguāng** (▸3).

1. See Stephen Eskildsen, *Teachings and Practices, TPEQ* p.123.

youth The spiritual form of the master, used occasionally in gnostic and Manichaean writings, referring to the eternal and life-giving presence of the Word incarnate as a master in this world, always full of the vigour, vitality, and freshness of youth.

In the *Apocryphon of John,* a revelational Nag Hammadi tractate, Jesus appears to his disciple John the son of Zebedee in several seemingly changing radiant forms that represent the true nature of the saviour. He is the divine Word – the eternal youth, older than creation, and the perpetual Servant, who is ever active, ever dutiful, ever diligent, and present in every detail of creation. This spiritual form is also known as the "image":

> Straightway . . . behold, the heavens opened and the whole creation which is below heaven shone, and the world was shaken. I was afraid, and behold, I saw in the light a Youth who stood by me. While I looked at him, he became an Old Man. And then he again changed his likeness, becoming like a Servant.
>
> There was not a plurality before me, but there was a likeness with multiple forms in the light, and the likenesses appeared through each other, and the likeness had three forms.
>
> And he said to me, "John, John, why are you afraid? You are not unfamiliar with this image, are you? That is, be not faint-hearted! I am the one who is with you always. I am the Father, I am the Mother, I am the Son. I am the Undefiled and Incorruptible One."
>
> *Apocryphon of John 1–2; cf. NHS33 pp.15, 17*

Manichaean writers also portrayed the master as a youth. The Coptic *Kephalaia* speaks of "Jesus the youth". In the Coptic psalms, Jesus is the "youth, son of the Dew",[1] while in a pastoral image in one of the *Psalms of Thomas,* the "youth" makes "music" on the bank of the river Euphrates, probably an allusion to the river of Water of Life that flows within a saviour, and is heard by the soul as the eternal Music. It is upon the bank of this river that the soul meets the master. The Water of Life is the divine Word, also called the "Dew" and the "Fragrance of Life":

I am not of the sons of the world
 that I should fall into the snares and be caught.
I am a chosen one of the living ones,
 a lamp of light entire. . . .
I walked until I reached the bank of the Euphrates:
On the bank of the river, . . .
 there is a youth sitting, making music;
The youth sits there and makes music
 in the Fragrance of Life that dwells upon him.
Psalms of Thomas V, Manichaean Psalm Book; cf. MPB p.211

In a Parthian text, Mānī is praised as the "friend" and the "youth", while the "lovely maidens and girls" who fall in love with him, are the pure souls, his devotees. The *Nous* (Mind, Intelligence) is another term for the divine Word:

All gods and inhabitants (of the spiritual realms),
 the mountains, trees, and springs –
The spacious and strong palaces and halls
 became joyful at your coming, O friend.
When the lovely maidens and girls,
 sprung from the *Nous,* saw you,
 they all with one accord blessed you, O flawless youth.
Manichaean Hymn, GMU p.306ff., RMP at; cf. GSR p.44, ML p.120

The term also appears in the Egyptian "Lament of Isis for her Osiris", known as the *Maneros.* According to the legend narrated by the Greek author Plutarch (*c.*46–120), the two gods Isis and Osiris were married. The husband, Osiris, was murdered, but Isis discovered and reunited the pieces of his body. She was chief mourner at the funeral, and by her magical powers was able to restore him to life. Attempts to interpret the myth allegorically are essentially speculative, but the lament sounds like the longing of a mystic devotee for the inner beloved – the "beautiful youth" and "helper":

Return, oh return!
God *Panu,* return!

Those that were enemies are no more here.
O lovely helper, return,
that you may see me, your sister, who loves you.
Do you come not near me?
O beautiful youth, return, oh return!

When I see you not, my heart sorrows for you,
my eyes ever seek you:
I roam about for you, to see you in the form of the *Naj',*
to see you, to see you, O beautiful beloved one.
Let me, the radiant, see you, god *Panu,* All-Glory,
let me see you again!
To your beloved come, blessed *Onnofris;*
Come to your sister, come to your wife;
God *Urtuhet,* on, come!
Come to your consort!

Maneros; cf. in HMEN p.40, in TGH1 pp.293–94 (n.4)

Christian writers have also, on occasion, portrayed Christ as the eternal youth. He appears as such in the poems of Mechthild of Magdeburg. In one, she adapts a medieval love story to the needs of mystic allegory, in which the soul is depicted as a maiden, and the divine beloved as a youth, whom she desires.[2]

See also: **image**.

1. *Manichaean Psalm Book, MPB* pp.155, 167.
2. Mechthild of Magdeburg, *Flowing Light* 1:44, *RMM* pp.20–25.

zanakh, **zanakhdān**, **źaqan** (P), **dhaqan** (A) *Lit.* chin, the lower jaw; sometimes implies the dimple on the chin; in Sufi poetic imagery, the chin of the beloved, another of the several terms symbolizing the inner spiritual beloved and his beauty; the focus of the lover's inner contemplation. *Zanakh, zanakhdān* and *źaqan* are often qualified by *chāh* (well, pit, prison, dungeon, snare), and *chāh-i zanakh, chāh-i zanakhdān* and *chāh-i źaqan* refer to the dimple or small pit on the chin. The double meaning is used by Sufi poets to evoke images of becoming lost in the spiritual depths of the beloved's face within.

Some Sufi systematizers have seen different shades of meaning between the terms for the chin.[1] ʿIrāqī, Muḥammad al-Dārābī, and the *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* for example – the later writers probably following the earlier – all interpret the dimple or pit on the chin as signifying inner hindrances in the lover's ascent when contemplating the beloved.[2] These fine distinctions, however, are not readily demonstrated from the writings of the Sufi poets themselves. In

fact, the choice of terms used by Ḥāfiẓ, Saʿdī, ʿAṭṭār, Sanāʾī and others, often seems to be dictated more by the requirements of rhyme than by concern for the details of mystical metaphor.

Saʿdī says that the radiant beloved is himself the "Fountain of Life". Khiżr is a legendary saint of the Middle East who found the Water of Life in the land of darkness (this world), and himself became the Fountain of Life:

> If Khiżr had trodden the path
> to the dimple on your chin *(chāh-i zanakhdān),*
> he would not have wanted to find the Fountain of Life.
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 308:7, KSSS p.315; cf. TOS p.416*

The divine beloved is the source of the Water of Life, the divine creative power:

> The Water of Life does not exist in this world,
> except in the dimple on your chin *(chāh-i zanakhdān).*
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 71:5, KSSS p.259; cf. TOS p.103*

To drink this divine "Water", the lover must fall into the deep well of the beloved's spiritual form:

> There is no pitfall *(chāh)* in the true believers' path
> save the dimple on his chin *(chāh-i zanakhdān).*
> How long shall I sit on the brink of the well *(chāh),*
> thirsting for the Water of Life?
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 226:5–6, KSSS p.294; cf. TOS p.307*

Saʿdī for a moment drops the metaphors, and explains that really it is the mystery of divine love that enraptures the lover's heart:

> It is neither a mole *(khāl),* nor a chin *(zanakhdān),*
> nor yet dishevelled tresses *(zulf),*
> that have stolen the mystic's heart:
> No, it is a divine mystery.
> *Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 393:4, KSSS p.335; cf. TOS p.523*

Sanāʾī invokes an image of the moon, itself a symbol for the beauty of the beloved as a reflection of the divine Sun. Anyone who sees this beauty is enraptured:

> Whoever beheld the moon shining from your chin *(zanakhdān)*
> became a slave and devotee of its dimple *(zanakhdān).*
> *Sanāʾī, Dīvān 32, AMM p.809; cf. in SSE1 p.86*

Ḥāfiẓ uses a similar metaphor:

> The effulgence of the moon's splendour
> arises from the radiance of your face:
> The brilliance of all beauty
> from the dimple on your chin *(chāh-i zanakhdān).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.2, DIH p.30; cf. DHWC (2:1) p.13*

He also links the imagery of the dimple with the tresses of the beloved's hair, another image for his captivating beauty. He tries to get away, but once enraptured, there is no escape from the beloved:

> By clinging to the curls of your tress,
> my heart climbed out of the dimple on your chin *(chāh-i zanakh).*
> But alas, having come forth from the pit *(chāh),*
> it fell straight into a trap.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.99, DIH p.186; cf. DHWC (179:9) p.346*

The spiritual understanding that comes to the soul in contemplation of the beloved far exceeds even the most profound intellect and human wisdom:

> A myriad profound thoughts cannot plumb the depths
> of the beauty lying in the dimple on your chin *(zanakhdān).*
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.158, DIH p.274; cf. DHWC (350:6) p.601*

Sometimes, *zanakh* is qualified as the *sīb-i zanakh* (apple chin), again referring to the dimple at either end of a well-rounded and possibly rosy apple. This term is said to refer to the pleasure and beauty experienced in contemplation of the beloved,[3] though in fact all terms referring to contemplation of the inner beloved imply his beauty.

Ḥāfiẓ is again a frequent user of the imagery:

> Listen! What says the apple of your chin *(sīb-i zanakhdān)?* –
> "Many a Joseph of Egypt has fallen into this dimple *(chāh)* of mine."
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.25, DIH p.69; cf. DHWC (97:3) p.213*

The attractions of the divine beloved, he writes, far exceed the attractions of paradise:

> O pious one, do not preach paradise to me:
> The apple of his chin *(sīb-i zanakh)*
> suits me better than that garden.
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.231, DIH p.370; cf. DHWC (494:4) p.813*

The bliss of contemplation on the beloved transcends the joys of heaven:

> What can anyone know of the joy of heavenly fruits,
> who has not tasted the apple of the chin *(sīb-i zanakhdān)*
> of that beauteous one?
>
> *Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.81, DIH p.168; cf. DHWC (207:6) p.384*

He also casts the biblical Joseph – of legendary beauty and a common Sufi image for the beloved – as a devotee of the Divine. The image of Joseph being thrown into the well (as happens in the biblical story)[4] of the beloved's chin is used by other Sufi poets.[5]

1. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.89; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.198; Darvīsh Muḥammad Ṭabasī, *Athar, AMT* p.401; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* p.443.
2. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.89; *Mir'āt-i ʿUshshāq,* in *TAT* p.189; Muḥammad al-Dārābī, *Laṭīfah-'i Ghaybī* 2, *LGMD* p.140.
3. ʿIrāqī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt, RLRI* p.89; Darvīsh Muḥammad Ṭabasī, *Athar, AMT* p.401; Tahānawī, *Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4* pp.443, 445.
4. *Genesis* 37:1–36.
5. *E.g.* ʿAṭṭār, *Conference of the Birds* 1213–34, 3812–29, *MTAN* pp.287, 408, *CBD* pp.59, 197; Saʿdī, *Badāyiʿ* 14:2, *KSSS* p.348, *BOS* p.16.

zulf (P) *Lit.* curling locks or tresses (of hair), ringlets; the whole head of hair; also appears in expressions such as *zulf-i parīshān* (dishevelled scattered tresses), *zulf-i tābdār* (curling tresses), *zulf-i darāz* (long curling tresses), *zulf-i zamīn-sāy* (long curling tresses, as if sweeping the ground); in Sufi poetic imagery, the curling tresses or locks of the divine beloved's hair.

The beloved's tresses have a spread of metaphorical meaning depending upon the context. His curling tresses are said to entangle the heart of the lover, permitting no escape, holding the lover's heart in spellbound contemplation of the otherworldly beauty of the inner spiritual beloved. The fragrance of his musk-laden tresses indicates the spiritual atmosphere that surrounds him, and attracts the lover. His dishevelled tresses cause a bewilderment of bliss and attraction in the being of the lover. The dark tresses of the beloved may also veil the face of the beloved from the lover, resulting in the pain of separation. "Tresses" can also represent the dark veil of worldly illusion and confusion that stands between the soul and the beloved. Sometimes, tresses *(zulf)* signify the darkness of unbelief *(ẓulmat-i kufr).*

The *Kashf al-Lughāt,* quoted by Tahānawī, attempts to define the various meanings of the beloved's tresses:

> Its divergent meanings are explained by the Persian *Kashf al-Lughāt* ('Etymological Dictionary'), as follows: "The tress *(zulf)* may express the darkness of unbelief *(kufr),* or a knotty point of the divine law *(sharīʿat).* It may represent a difficulty that hinders the mystic's progress, or a mystery pertaining to divine Reality. Furthermore, it has been said that, from the canopy of heaven to the face of the earth, all multiplicity that exists and every veil contrived by the imagination can be described as a tress *(zulf).*"
>
> *Tahānawī, Kashshāf Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Funūn, KIFT4 p.442; cf. in SSE1 pp.76–77*

The definitions of such terms by Sufi systematizers often seem adrift from their actual use in Sufi literature. The poetry of Ḥāfiẓ, ʿAṭṭār, Saʿdī, and others abounds with allusions to tresses, curls, twists, coils, ringlets, and tangles of hair, and it is in verses such as these that the meaning of the imagery is best sought. The commonest uses of the term are as the tresses that veil the face of the beloved, and as the tresses that so entangle the heart of the lover, that he has no desire to escape.

The tresses create such a dark veil of illusion that it seems as if God Himself does not even exist in this world:

> Alas for this godforsaken country that sprang forth
> from her curl-concealed face *(rūy dar zīr-i zulf);*
> Could she but disperse the tresses *(zulf)* that hide her face,
> unbelievers would again have faith.
>
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 193:3751–52, DASN p.203; cf. in SSE1 p.76*

In this darkness, souls burn in the fire of their illusions. Yet hidden in "every heart" is the light of the beloved's face:

> Your tresses *(zulf)* scorch the souls in their bodies,
> like moths at candlelight;
> Yet your face kindles bright the candle flame,
> the lamplight of every heart.
>
> *Sanāʾī, Dīvān 150, AMM p.885; cf. in SSE1 p.77*

Strangely, this state of affairs has been brought about by the Divine. His tresses have created the illusion. They are like furrows on His pure brow or a grimace on His loving "face". But why He did it, nobody knows:

> The curls of Your tresses *(pīch-i zulf)* entwine around Your face of love;
> It is Your own radiance that brings about this entanglement.
> But why wrinkle Your face?
>
> *Maghribī, Dīvān 41:403, DSMR p.99; cf. in SSE1 p.80*

Only when the beloved draws back the veil can the true inner light be seen:

When she drew back the veil of her jet-black tresses *(zulf-i mushkīn)*
to reveal her beauteous light,
suddenly the true dawn broke
in the pitch dark of the night.
Sanā'ī, Dīvān, in FNI1 p.63; cf. in SSE1 p.83

The beloved's tresses are also symbols of his enrapturing and entangling beauty:

My heart became entangled
in your tresses' curls *(kham-i zulf);*
Not just my heart, but my soul too,
became ensnared in the same trap.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 242:4312, DASN p.233; cf. in SSE1 p.80

Even so, the lover is enamoured of that entanglement:

I will never unravel even a strand of hair *(sar-i mū)*
from the curls of your hair *(pīch-i zulf)*
that twist and turn about me.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 264:4536, DASN p.246; cf. in SSE1 p.80

O Ḥāfiẓ, make no bid for freedom
from those entangling tresses *(zulf-i tābdār);*
For only they are free who are bound fast by his ropes.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.100, DIH p.188; cf. DHWC (137:10) p.281

The lover may feel that he never intended to walk the road of divine love, though in fact he had no option:

One day, the heart of Ḥāfiẓ set out
to view the spectacle of your tresses *(zulf).*
He intended to return, but instead
remained forever captive to your tresses *(zulf).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.121, DIH p.212; cf. DHWC (177:11) p.342

The lover sees himself as being irrevocably drawn into the beloved's entanglement of love:

Your tresses *(zulf)* entwine, and then entangle,
every moment, adding further twists against my will;

Such contortion, and such confusion of curls *(zulf)*
bends my wits beyond endurance.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 476:7073, DASN p.375; cf. in SSE1 p.81

I thought that I would free my heart
from the tangle of your curls *(chanbar-i zulf),*
but I fear it is impossible,
for they lie coil upon coil *(shikan bar shikan).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 317:7, KSSS p.317; cf. TOS pp.427–28

It is this trap that stirs up the fervour for spiritual realization:

See how the pain of the twists and turns of your tresses *(zulf)*
arouses such a reckless ardour in devoted hearts.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 623:8607, DASN p.451; cf. in SSE1 p.81

Even belief and unbelief are surrendered in the beloved's love trap. Then the duality and distinctions of the world cease to hold much meaning:

The curls *(kham)* in your tresses *(zulf)*
are traps for belief and unbelief:
This is but a small matter in your workshop.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.24, DIH p.69; cf. DHWC (105:1) p.224

The beloved's beauty and attraction is such that innumerable souls can be entangled therein:

If you intend to bewilder people's hearts,
then just shake loose your tresses *(zulf),*
for you can hold a heart in every curl *(kham).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 372:8, KSMF (599) p.878; cf. TOS p.497

The beloved is a hunter, skilfully lassoing lovers with his beauty and love:

How swift and sure, O Lord, when hunting lovers,
is the noose of Your locks *(kamand-i zulf)*
and the lasso of Your curls *(kamand-i zulf).*
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 342:5454, DASN p.293; cf. in SSE1 p.85

Sometimes, the lasso of your tresses *(kamand-i zulf)*
pulls me powerfully;
Sometimes, the bow of your eyebrow *(kamān-i abrū)*
slays me with yearning.
ʿAṭṭār, Unsourced, in FNI1 p.64; cf. in SSE1 p.85

It is the spiritually intoxicated who are caught and imprisoned in this manner:

I am as mad as Majnūn:
You enfold me in the chains of your curls *(zanjīr-i zulf),*
you bind me in your tresses' locks *(zanjīr-i zulf).*
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 735:9764, DASN p.515; cf. in SSE1 p.82

The lover is enslaved by the beloved's beauty:

A slave's ring in my ear bears witness
to my devotion to her dishevelled tresses *(zulf-i parīshān).*
Ah, how lovely do those tresses *(zulf)* seem,
lying dishevelled across her moon-bright face.
ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 71:2432, DASN p.137; cf. in SSE1 p.86

There is no place of safety but his love and beauty:

Since I see pitfalls along the Way on every side,
there is no refuge save refuge in his tresses *(zulf).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.20, DIH p.63; cf. DHWC (92:6) p.205

The lover will go anywhere for a glimpse of the beloved:

Though I know that travelling unknown paths
can lead nowhere –
Yet still I will follow after
the sweet fragrance of those dishevelled tresses *(zulf-i parīshān).*
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.174, DIH p.299; cf. DHWC (391:2) p.669

The lover is "intoxicated" by the fragrance of the beloved's tresses:

The fragrant scent of your tresses' curls *(jaʿd)*
keeps me forever intoxicated.
Every moment, I am devastated
by the guile of your bewitching eye.
Ḥāfiẓ, Dīvān, DHA p.41, DIH p.101; cf. DHWC (86:1) p.194

The fragrance of his tresses is the divine Breath, the creative power that draws the soul to the Divine:

Maybe this soul-refreshing breeze from the Breath of Dawn is
drifting from your scent-diffusing tresses *(ṭurrah-'i anbar fishān).*
Saʿdī, Ṭayyibāt 102:7, KSSS p.265; cf. TOS p.141

Sometimes, the tresses represent nearness to the beloved and the delights of intimacy with him:

> If I could possess but one strand of her tresses *(zulf),*
> I would treasure it as the heart's precious eye,
> as the cherished love of my own soul.
> *ʿAṭṭār, Dīvān 471:7017, DASN p.372; cf. in SSE1 p.75*

But ultimately, divine love is a mystery, only comprehended by experience, though even then the lover remains bewildered by it:

> Long are the tales told of the beloved's tresses *(zulf).*
> What can be said? It is something of the deepest mystery.
> Ask not of me the story of those knotted tresses *(zulf-i pur-chīn):*
> it is a chain leading mad lovers into bondage.
> *Shabistarī, Gulshan-i Rāz 760–61, GRS p.97; cf. GRSS (763–64) p.74*

North Indian Sufis have used the same imagery:

> We cannot escape the locks *(zulf)* and mole (of the beloved):
> our path is strewn with snare and lure.
> *Chandra Bhān Brahman, Dīvān 8 p.9, CBBF p.104*

> Like a hummingbird hovering around a hyacinth,
> my heart is entangled in the locks *(zulf)* of the beloved.
> *Chandra Bhān Brahman, Dīvān 33 p.22, CBBF p.108*

See also: **gīsū** (▸4), **jaʿdah**, **mū**, **ṭurrah**.